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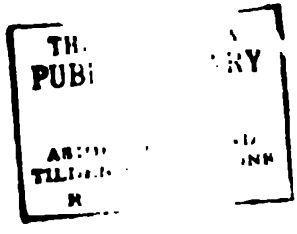
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# THE LIFE AND ADVENTURES
OF
# MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT
# AND AMERICAN NOTES

BY

CHARLES DICKENS

*ILLUSTRATED WITH ENGRAVINGS ON STEEL*

IN TWO VOLUMES
VOL. I

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# INTRODUCTION

By EDWIN PERCY WHIPPLE

## I

## THE LIFE AND ADVENTURES OF MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT

Dickens's "American Notes for General Circulation" was published in October, 1842. In January, 1843, appeared the first number of the "Life and Adventures of Martin Chuzzlewit." The work was continued in monthly instalments until its completion in July, 1844. It was not successful in the sense in which "Pickwick," "Nickleby," and "The Old Curiosity Shop" had been successful. Instead of a monthly circulation of fifty thousand copies, which the author might naturally have anticipated, it at first obtained a circulation of only twenty thousand. The introduction of the American scenes, which sadly interfered with the unity of the story, added but two or three thousand more.

"The Christmas Carol," published while the larger work was in progress, showed a profit to the author of little more than seven hundred pounds. Dickens accordingly found himself in vexatious pecuniary embarrassments. The irritation of these was increased by a disagreement with his publishers, Chapman and Hall. In September, 1841, John Forster had drawn up an agreement duly signed, between Dickens and this firm, to this effect: That "Master Humphrey's Clock" was to cease with the close of the romance of "Barnaby Rudge," "the respective ownerships continuing as provided; and the new work, in twenty numbers, similar to those of 'Pickwick' and 'Nickleby,' was not to begin until after an interval of twelve months, in

November, 1842. During its publication he was to receive £200 monthly, to be accounted as part of the expenses; for all of which, and all risks incident, the publishers made themselves responsible, under conditions the same as in the 'Clock' agreement; except that, out of the profits of each number, they were to have only a fourth, three fourths going to him; and this arrangement was to hold good until the termination of six months from the completed book, when, upon payment to him of a fourth of the value of all existing stock, they were to have half the future interest. During the twelve months' interval before the book began, he was to be paid £150 each month; but this was to be drawn from his three fourths of the profits, and in no way to interfere with the monthly payments of £200, while the publication was going on." There was a provision added that if — in case of what was then considered an improbable event — the profits of the book should prove inadequate to the repayment of the £1800 advanced to Dickens in monthly instalments of £150 before the publication of the serial work was to begin, "the publishers were to have power to appropriate fifty pounds a month out of the £200 payable for authorship in the expenses of each number; but though this had been introduced with my consent," adds Forster, "I also knew too much of the antecedent relations of the parties to regard it as other than a mere form to satisfy the attorneys in the case." After the publication of the sixth number of "Chuzzlewit," however, he tells us that he heard "with infinite pain that from Mr. Hall, the younger partner of the firm which had enriched itself by 'Pickwick' and 'Nickleby,' and a very kind well-disposed man, there had dropped an inconsiderate hint to the writer of those books that it might be desirable to put the clause in force. It had escaped him without thinking of all that it involved; certainly the senior partner, whatever amount of as thoughtless sanction he had at the moment given to it, always much regretted it, and made endeavors to exhibit his regret; but the mischief was done, and for the time was irreparable."

Every reader of Lockhart's life of Scott must remember the explosion of rage with which Scott received the proposal of

ood, the bookseller, to recast the "upwinding" of the "The Black Dwarf." The bookseller not only objected text as it stood, but, on the advice of some nameless literson, "on whose taste *he* placed great reliance," suggested ine of a better conclusion to the story, and offered to bear pense of cancelling the printed sheets if his proposal pted. The blood of Scott literally boiled in his veins. James," he wrote to Ballantyne, "I have received ood's impudent letter. G. d. his s.! Tell him and his or that I belong to the Black Hussars of Literature, who give nor receive criticism. I'll be cursed but this is the ipudent proposal that ever was made." The unaccustomed ty of Scott in this missive only shows how fierce was his tary resentment of the suggestion, that the bookseller and kseller's "literary man" should presume to sit in judgment product of his genius. The rage of Dickens, though the tances were not the same, was identical in spirit with Scott. The hint of Mr. Hall that the firm might think ent to enforce a clause the necessity of which was never ated in the original agreement, wounded him to the

His consciousness of inward power, far exceeding that ch he had achieved his previous triumphs, was touched most sensitive nerve. He knew that he was doing some- etter than he had formerly done; he was correspondingly l at the suggestion that his popularity was decreasing in ie ratio in which he felt his genius was increasing; and ly suspected that his publishers were busied with the ension that — to vary Macaulay's words regarding Godol- hen that horse-racing statesman feared a counter revolu- they had bet too high on Dickens, and that it was high r them "to hedge." Dickens's wrath at this insult to sonal pride, and to his pride as an author, mildly insinu- it was, became ungovernable; for though personally the enial and jovial of men among his companions, though resuming to condescend to anybody, and receiving every- e met, whether lord or *littérateur*, on one level of y, he had a morbidly quick sense of personal dignity, —

a sense as swift to resent any slight to his position as a Man, as the haughtiest Somerset or Howard could be to resent any slight to his "Order." He was accordingly intensely offended by the "hint" of Mr. Hall, though he had driven with the firm a bargain as hard as any recorded in the annals of "the trade." "I am so irritated," wrote Dickens to Forster, "so rubbed in the tenderest part of my eyelids with bay-salt, by what I told you yesterday, that a wrong kind of fire is burning in my head, and I don't think I *can* write."

After proposing to make an arrangement with Bradbury and Evans as his future publishers, he declares that he is "bent upon paying Chapman and Hall *down*. "And when," he adds, "I have done that, Mr. Hall shall have a piece of my mind." Guided by the cooler judgment of Forster, Dickens did not come to an immediate rupture with Chapman and Hall; and the negotiations with Bradbury and Evans resulted for the time in a disagreement, which Dickens was not in a mood to compromise, for he would not yield to their suggestion as to the expediency of republishing, in a cheap form, the works which had already made him famous.

Indeed, both the publishers he desired to abandon and the publishers he desired to adopt were probably more or less impressed with the notion that Dickens's popularity, in the coarse judgment of one of his reviewers, had "gone up like a rocket" and was now "coming down like the stick." Their experience of numerous contemporary novelists had justified them in dreading the reaction which commonly follows excessive popularity. They knew that the public was quick to discover that many a romancer it had at first hailed as a great and fertile genius either possessed no genius at all, or had worked a vein so thin that its wealth was exhausted in his first publication, and that all which remained was the mere slag and refuse of a mine never very rich in itself. Chapman and Hall may have had a vague fear that the author, to whom they had advanced money, and to publish whose works they had submitted to exactions such as hardly any other author had wrung from a publisher's reluctant greed, might turn out to be a Cibber instead of a Fielding, an

Ainsworth instead of a Scott. Dickens looked confidently into his growing genius; his publishers looked gloomily into their recording ledger; and the result was that the junior member of the firm "hinted" a possibility that the public was falling away from Dickens, when Dickens felt that his genius was never more capable of dominating and enthralling it. Richard Bentley, discerning the possibilities of Dickens's genius from the moment that Sam Weller appeared in the "Pickwick Papers," induced him to enter into seemingly liberal contracts for new works, which the author shortly afterwards was inclined to repudiate as giving a disproportionate share of the gains to the publisher; Chapman and Hall, after granting to the author such extremely liberal terms as to excite the admiring despair of the whole brotherhood of writers, made the fatal mistake of doubting the possibilities of his exceptional genius to pass on to ever widening recognition, and ever new triumphs.

"Martin Chuzzlewit," which never, in its serial form of publication, obtained a circulation of more than twenty-three thousand copies, afterwards ranked in respect to popularity next to "Pickwick" and "David Copperfield." Dickens knew what his publishers did not know, that since he had gone to the United States his experience of the world had been enlarged, that a season of comparative rest had quickened and deepened his genius, and that both his satirical and his dramatic power of depicting human character and human life had become brighter and stronger than ever. Indeed, he was himself sometimes amazed at the growth of his intellect, indicated to him by unexpected fertility of imagination, reason, and resource in developing characters which he had at first superficially conceived. "As to the way," he wrote to Forster, "in which these characters have opened out, that is, to me, one of the most surprising processes of the mind in this sort of invention. Given what one knows, what one does not know springs up: and I am as absolutely certain of its being true as of the law of gravitation — if such a thing be possible, more so." Forster very truly adds that this confession "displays exactly what in all his important characters was the very process of creation with him."

But the publishers, having a heavy weight on their shoulders, disturbed by the fact of a limited circulation of a work on which they had staked much money, were half blind to the great possibilities for the future which an intellectual advance so unmistakable as that from "Barnaby Rudge" to "Martin Chuzzlewit" ought to have impressed on their minds. This progress indicated that as long as the faculties of the humorist and novelist were vigorous, he would be under no necessity to repeat old characters or old incidents, but was capable, like Scott, of creating new characters and new incidents with every new work that engaged the sympathies or antipathies of his ever active brain and ever broadening heart. However high they may have bet on Dickens, there was no real reason in the fear which induced them "to hedge;" for his genius was so evidently *growing* that nothing but inaccurate judgment, based on timid policy, could have led them to suppose that it had finally *grown*. Indeed, this genius went on growing for years; and the great body of the reading public welcomed every additional evidence of growth with ever increasing delight and ever increasing recognition. Those who doubted the permanence of Dickens's popularity were amazed by its sure and steady advance. The booksellers looked on the phenomenon with something of the feeling with which a skeptical broker surveyed the rise of the New York Central Railroad in the stock market. As it rose to a premium of ten, to a premium of twenty, to a premium of fifty, to a premium of eighty, the cry constantly was that there must be a fall at each stage of the upward movement. Millions of dollars were lost in speculating on the probabilities that a stock which so rapidly rose in value must have some equally rapid period of depression; all the experiences and all the precedents of Wall Street sustained the theory; and yet every broker who ventured to act upon it was ruined. So the reputation of Dickens, considered as a marketable commodity, confounded all the calculations of the publishers. As a fancy stock it might be safe at fifty premium; at eighty premium it was a risk that still had in it a promise of profit; but when it continued to rise, and never ceased to rise until the death of the writer, the booksellers

fairly recognized the distinction between an exceptional genius, such as rarely appears on the planet, and a genius which, limited within narrow bounds, soon exhausts its resources and its power to attract. The publishers who purchased Dickens at his own high valuation made more money than the publishers of many good authors who were content with a comparatively modest remuneration, just as those capitalists who invested in New York Central at its highest price found themselves better off, in respect to dividends, than those who invested in Erie, or Wabash, or Milwaukee, or Northwestern, at fifty or eighty per cent. below par. The parallel might be extended to many other departments of business. It is sufficient to indicate that a popular author, continually growing in genius, is like a railroad, or any other company, continually growing in resources and business. It is not so much what is paid, as the *percentage* of return on what is paid, which concerns either the publisher or the broker; and the sagacity displayed in either case is the test by which we decide on the business capacity of the publisher who appreciates the intrinsic value of a man of genius whose powers are continually expanding, and the wisdom of the broker who intimately knows the value of a railroad whose trade is steadily remunerative and whose lucrative "connections" are constantly extending.

It is therefore plain that Chapman and Hall should not, as men of business, have dropped that "hint" which alienated from them the most popular novelist of the age. If they had considerately overlooked a transient pause in his immense popularity, and wisely humored a transient irritation of his offended pride, they would be thousands of pounds richer than they are now.

The moral of the whole matter is this, that when a publisher has discovered a "Big Bonanza," a real "Virginia Consolidated" mine, he should not be frightened by occasional irregularities in the amount of the annual receipts. He should have sense enough to fasten his attention on the exceptional richness of the vein. It is only two or three times in a century that a genius like that of Dickens is discovered, or that it is at first appreciated by those who wish to profit by its fertility.

The result of all Dickens's vexations and disappointments was a determination on his part to reside abroad. He believed that he could economize in France or Italy, and enjoy there [illegible] the advantages of England at half the expense. He [illegible] had to support an increasing family on a diminished i[ncome] [illegible] in England he was a son, a brother, a cousin, as well as a husband and father. "Beyond his own domestic expenses," [illegible] Forster, "there were many never satisfied claims from [illegible] quarters, not the more easily avoidable because they were [illegible] It is easy to understand that [illegible] [illegible] every person connected with him [illegible] [illegible] 1844 [illegible]

[illegible]

force directing the opinions of the public as well as contributing to its amusement, and the introduction into each succeeding romance of a deliberate attack on the abuses of some department or institution of the government of his country, made him consider the publication of one of his serial stories an important incident in the progress of social, legal, or political reform, which the praise or blame of critics could not seriously affect. Self-absorbed in his sense of the primary claim of his own writings to public attention, he became autocratic in his relations to the non-Dickens portion of the literature of his time. He insensibly gathered round himself a clique of sympathetic admirers, emancipated himself from the control of independent minds, and, strong in the feeling of his own genius, contemptuously disregarded all those who censured his faults, and hardly vouchsafed more than a protecting nod to those who rapturously extolled his shining merits. The public, instinctively recognizing him as an original genius, pampered every caprice into which he wandered, submitted to every pretension in which he indulged, tolerated even every assault he made on its cherished prejudices, because he had the power to make it laugh or cry at his sovereign will. Strong in the impregnable position he had thus established in the public mind and heart, he could afford to be indifferent either to censure or panegyric.

The purpose that Dickens had in view in writing "Martin Chuzzlewit" was to exhibit the master passion of selfishness in the wide variety of character in which it finds expression. The more subtle as well as the more obvious aspects of this passion he intended to represent in persons who agreed in being selfish, however widely they might differ as respects birth, manners, fortune, country, taste, cultivation, intellect, and conscience. Selfishness is the central idea of the story; and Pecksniff was originally designed as the central character, around whom mere selfish brutality like that of Jonas Chuzzlewit, and the more refined, the more remote, selfishness of self-will as embodied in the elder and younger Martin Chuzzlewit, might revolve, with any number of satellites, large and small, in their train. Considered however, as an artistic work, the romance is very imperfectly

constructed. When he first put pen to paper, the author knew his general design; but the development of the plot, the nature of the incidents, were determined by chance or caprice as he went on with his work. It may here be said that after "Chuzzlewit" he wrote no novel without first forming in his own mind an intelligent beginning, middle, and end; but in this, one of his most delightful creations, he wandered on without knowing in advance where he was to come out, and was indeed embarrassed with a crowd of characters whose ultimate destiny was as unseen by him as it was by his readers. His American scenes, which lend so much raciness to the book, were not contemplated when he began it; and he was far into the story before he had obtained a clear idea of its appropriate conclusion. But, as in the "Pickwick Papers," the wide range of incident and character over which he roamed at will gave a peculiar vivacity, spontaneity, and frolicsomeness to his genius, — a genius which was perhaps never so mirth-provoking as when it overleaped the bounds which his cultivated sense of artistic decorum afterwards, as Mrs. Gamp would say, "impoged."

We must therefore look at "Martin Chuzzlewit" in the spirit in which it was written. A sore point with Americans is its caricature of the people of the United States. In Dickens's last triumphal march through the country, as an interpretative reader of his own works, he made, in a few months, £20,000 in gold, — a sum larger than Abraham Lincoln received during his four years' service as President of the Republic, when the very existence of the Republic was in question, enveloped as it was in a [illegible] storm of fire and blood. In a farewell banquet given to him in New York, he admitted that his "American Notes" [illegible] to the American people, but [illegible] seemed to remember that the [illegible] it might be called, was not [illegible] "American Notes for General Circulation," but in [illegible] "Martin Chuzzlewit." General Choke's remark [illegible] "We [illegible]," seemed to be on [illegible] which assembled [illegible] the departing [illegible]. In "Martin Chuz-

zlewit" Dickens appears personally as an enemy to our whole republican system as embodied in the men and women then living in the country. He breaks out, after a deliciously hûmorous account of the Watertoast Association of United Sympathizers with Daniel O'Connell, in a diatribe worthy of "the young Columbian" or of Elijah Pogram himself. "Who think," he says in reference to ordinary American patriots, "that crying out to other nations, old in their iniquity, 'We are no worse than you!' (No worse!) is high defence and 'vantage ground enough for that Republic, but yesterday let loose upon her noble course, and but to-day so maimed and lame, so full of sores and ulcers, foul to the eye and almost hopeless to the sense, that her best friends turn from the loathsome creature in disgust." Again, when in leaving the United States, Mark Tapley suggests to young Martin that if he were a painter, and were called upon to paint the American eagle, he should "draw it like a Bat, for its short-sightedness; like a Bantam, for its bragging; like a Magpie, for its honesty; like a Peacock, for its vanity; like an Ostrich, for its putting its head in the mud and thinking nobody sees it." To this description, Martin can only hope that it might also be drawn like "a Phœnix, for its power of springing from the ashes of its faults and vices and soaring up anew into the sky!"

Whatever may be said against the United States, there is a general prejudice, supported by the fact that the emigrants of many nations have found it for their interest to act upon it, that the country possesses millions on millions of cheap, rich, and wholesome land, by cultivating which a European peasant easily becomes a member of what Disraeli happily styled "a territorial democracy;" but in reading "Chuzzlewit" an English farmer would suppose that the unoccupied land of the United States was like the swamps in "Eden,"[1] where young Martin and Mark Tapley reaped no other harvest for their labor than malarious fever. The animus of the book, whether

[1] Mr. Forster seems to think that Dickens found his Eden when travelling by canal from Harrisburgh to Pittsburgh, but his own description of Cairo in *American Notes*, chapter xii., is much more suggestive.

rials launched against him by our Jefferson Bricks, were duly sent to him — "Per mail." The result was what might have been expected. Dickens was enraged; but he saw that the peculiar powers in which he excelled all living men were more than a match for the facts, the arguments, and the declamations of his opponents. At the present day, we have forgotten the solid as well as the screaming newspaper articles which stung him into retaliation, while we still heartily laugh over the monstrous caricatures of American life and character in which his humorous rage found expression.

The contest only illustrates one of a hundred instances, in which a man, whose wrath finds a vent in humor, is manifestly more effective in addressing the public mind, than a man whose wrath comes out in direct appeals to passion and prejudice.

Dickens impersonated his newspaper opponents in Colonel Diver and Mr. Jefferson Brick of "The Rowdy Journal," with an oblique reference to meaner adversaries in "The New York Sewer." The names themselves were efficient; and the way in which the humorist impersonated his sarcasms by making them alive, and represented them as walking the streets of New York in company with respectable citizens, clearly demonstrated how feeble are impassioned declamations against delicious drolleries.

With a kind of gleeful malice, Dickens put language into the mouths and pens of his enemies which only humorously exaggerated the language in which he was himself denounced; and he performed this trick in so effective a fashion that Americans joined with Englishmen in laughing at the American editors who were so savagely earnest in vindicating the cause of their country against its humorous assailant. There is, indeed, no ferocity of invective, though it combine the point and venom of Junius with the passion and imagery of Burke, that can withstand a humorist, who retorts by individualizing his opponents in picturesque forms of ludicrous character, in which all their declamations and arguments are, by easy exaggeration, turned against themselves, and they are made ridiculous by the simple process of heightening every

extravagance of their rhetoric, and by caricaturing every peculiarity of their method of argumentation. In this way he answers his antagonists by adopting their general mode of attack on himself, — makes the attack ridiculous by adding to its fierceness, — and, penetrating into the camp of the enemy, stimulates an insubordination which is expressed in roars of laughter, and rouses a mutiny which finds the most dangerous of all outlets, that of sneers and jeers of contempt. As long as declamations and arguments are answered by corresponding declamations and arguments, the controversial battle goes on according to the established rules, with a good hope that the most brilliant rhetoricians and the ablest logicians will win; — but when the power of humorous characterization comes into the controversy, then Artemus Ward is an adequate offset to Calhoun, and Mark Twain more than a match for Webster. A joke is of small effect in itself; all orators and statesmen occasionally condescend to a jesting mood; but a joke happily embodied in character, a joke which caricatures a weak point in the personality of a statesman, a joke which felicitously hits some defect in his nature which multitudes instantly recognize when it is vividly presented to them by a great humorist, is more than a joke, because the moment it is appreciated it becomes a power.

It would be useless to deny that Dickens had some foundation of truth on which to base his droll characterizations, not only of Colonel Diver and Mr. Jefferson Brick, but of Zephaniah Scadder and Hannibal Chollop, of La Fayette Kettle and General Choke, of Elijah Pogram and Captain Kedgick, of Mrs. Hominy and Miss Codger; but still the question remains, why he should have deliberately selected for representation only the rascality and folly of the country, of which he could have had but a slight knowledge, and pass over the men of sense and honesty whom he daily met? Few tourists from England ever had a fairer opportunity to become acquainted with honorable American gentlemen, whether merchants, manufacturers, lawyers, jurists, statesmen, scholars, soldiers, or men of letters. He availed himself of this privilege; but when he

came to reproduce his experiences as a romancer, he turned aside from all the respectable men with whom he had associated, in order to fasten his attention on whatever was most hateful, depraved, despicable, and it may be added, laughable, in the nation which received him as an honored guest. One reason for this strange oversight has been already stated. He was irritated at the scurrility lavished on him on account of his "American Notes;" but another reason still remains to be stated. He found himself in a country where all people who could read seemed to be more familiar with his creations than were his own countrymen. Millions of copies of his books were distributed through the whole length and breadth of the land. He was surfeited with praises of his genius; and naturally asked why he, practically a poor man, should not have in this country a copyright, however small, on the products of his genius? Most of his entertainers, though warm in their admiration of his creations, gave him but slight hope that the creator thereof would ever be protected here in the property of his works. He wrote to Forster in May, 1842, from Niagara Falls, that there were two obstacles to international copyright. The first was the delight of an American in getting the better of a man in a bargain, — of "doing" him in a matter of business. The second was the universal national vanity. In regard to the first, he oddly believed that an essential part of the pleasure which an American derived from the reading of a popular English book, was the fact that the author got nothing by it. "It is so dar-nation 'cute — so knowing in Jonathan to get his reading on those terms. He has the Englishman so regularly on the hip that his eye twinkles with slyness, cunning, and delight; and he chuckles over the humor of the page with an appreciation of it quite inconsistent with, and apart from, its honest purchase. The raven has n't more joy in eating a stolen piece of meat, than the American has in reading the English book he gets for nothing." As to the second class, the elevated class of Americans, he tells his friend that they are glad to see a popular English author, who has won the admiration of an American public; "they flock about

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blarmed if it ain't Dickens!' and stood in a group of *five Americans!* But the pleasantest part of the story is that they were, one and all, glad to see him; that their chief man, or leader, who had met him in New York, at once introduced them all round with the remark, 'Personally, our countrymen and you can fix it friendly, sir, I do expectuate;' and that, through the stormy passage to Genoa which followed, they were excellent friends." Dickens's account of what followed reminds the reader of a narrative by Mark Twain. The member of the American company who had the travelling dictionary would not part with it, though he was sick in a berth next to that of Dickens. The latter heard, now and then, the American travellers coming down to their leader with the questions: "I say, what's French for a pillow?" "Is there any Italian phrase for a lump of sugar? Just look, will you!" "What in the devil does echo mean? The garsong says echo to everything." They were "excessively curious to know, too, the population of every little town on the Cornice, and all its statistics, perhaps the very last subjects within the capacity of the human intellect that would ever present themselves to an Italian steward's mind. He was a very willing fellow, our steward; and having some vague idea that they would like a large number, said at hazard fifty thousand, ninety thousand, four hundred thousand, when they asked about the population of a place not larger than Lincoln's Inn Fields. And when they said *Non possible!* (which was the leader's invariable reply), he doubled or trebled the amount, to meet what he supposed their views, and make it quite satisfactory."

The English scenes, incidents, and characters of "Martin Chuzzlewit" are generally in Dickens's best manner. The writer of this Preface, in a lecture delivered over thirty years ago, remarked in allusion to the satire of the novel, that "as Americans we have a decided advantage over our transatlantic friends, even in the matter of being caricatured by the novelist whom both are rivals in admiring; for certainly if there be any character in which Dickens has seized on a national trait, that character is Pecksniff, and that national trait is English."

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Forster, in speaking of "the astonishing fun and co[illegible] of the American scenes, adds that the Americans Pecksniff at any rate. Bred in a more poisonous sw[illegible] their Eden, of greater, older standing, and much har[illegible] drained, Pecksniff was all our own. The confess[illegible] encouraging to national pride, but this character [illegible] English, that though our countrymen are as a rule [illegible] Pecksniffs, the ruling weakness is to countenance and [illegible] the race. When people call the character exagger[illegible] protest that the lines are too broad to deceive any[illegible] only refuse, naturally enough, to sanction in a book [illegible] their lives is passed in tolerating if not in wors[illegible] Forster indeed had some difficulty in dissuading Dic[illegible] printing this motto on the title page of the book [illegible] homes the scene, yourselves the actors, here!" and [illegible] the daring as well as the vigor and discernment of D[illegible] taking for the central figure of a tale of existing life [illegible] sleek, smiling, crawling abomination" as Pecksniff [illegible] the vivid presentation of such a hateful type of [illegible] abounding in all countries, and poisoning all societies [illegible] it descends, should be ranked among moral and patrio[illegible] As "Pickwickian" has become a synonym of jovial be[illegible] so "Pecksniffian" has become the fatal word by [illegible] members of the English race stigmatize and blast [illegible] of all forms of hypocrisy, the [illegible] external of morality and benevolence. The characte[illegible] [illegible] as represented by Dickens to deceive [illegible] [illegible] deceive thousands of honest people in a[illegible] Any person who has not Pecksniff, and has not been [illegible] by [illegible] many times, [illegible] be a person whose exper[illegible] been extremely limited. In the [illegible] representati[illegible] we frequently feel like exclaiming with the shrewd an[illegible] old miser, Anthony Chuzzlewit, "[illegible] a hypo[illegible] sniff." [illegible] the original, [illegible] are [illegible] streets, in banks and [illegible] of philanthropists, we know that [illegible] only [illegible] mind and body which enables him to slip into place[illegible]

honor, and profit as a preëminently "respectable" man, — a man soft in manner, incapable of anger, loftily moral though with a lamb's gentleness, embodying in himself all that hypocrisy can mimic of the austere integrity of the old Puritan and the expansive benevolence of the modern philanthropist, and indeed a perfect Judas in everything but this, that, after receiving his thirty pieces of silver, he has not the grace to go out and hang himself, but invests the thirty pieces in a good dividend-paying stock, and then, serenely smiling on the gulls who hasten to do him reverence, talks to them beautifully on the obligations of the moral law, and of the sure rewards which wait on a life mainly devoted to following out the precepts laid down in the gospels. It is excessively difficult to punish this kind of sinner; his bland temperament teaches him to suppress all the signs of resentment which a man with a bit of blood, or heart, or soul in him instinctively reveals when his roguery has been suspected or exposed; and to all obloquy he opposes that apparently just reliance on the testimony of a pure conscience, a testimony known only to himself, which he confidently expects will silence all the noise of eloquent defamation. His position seems impregnable, undermined though it be by barrels of gunpowder, which have been collected by the industry of attorneys and orators; for there seems to be no method by which the train can be lighted. Suddenly a simple honest man in the expectant crowd suggests the name of Pecksniff, and then the explosion is so terrific as not only to blow that excellent gentleman into the air, but to endanger the lives and limbs of many of the bystanders. When everything else fails to expose and convict a politic and plausible rogue, the mere act of connecting his name with that of Pecksniff insures his downfall; for the mass of voters are well acquainted with the vices of that personage; they hate him and them so cordially that they would rather submit to be governed by Mr. Jefferson Brick, or Mr. Hannibal Chollop, or the Honorable Elijah Pogram, than by that negation of all manliness to which, with a kind of ferocious derision, they attach the epithet "Pecksniffian."

Mr. Pecksniff, up to a certain period in the progress of the

story, has the usual good fortune of the hypocrite in p
a dupe who is the advertiser of his virtues to the w
dupe is Tom Pinch. It is probable that a man like
rejoicing in his faculty of penetrating, with a glance,
all the outside pretensions of a rogue into those
of character where the rogue considers himself
from all eyes but his own, had a peculiar liking
of tenderness, pity, and respect, for the person who
on trust, and who believes that others are
treats
to the
Pinch, Mr. Pecksniff
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illustration of Tom's constant habit of subordinating his own interest and happiness to the interest and happiness of others. And the worst of it is, that this sublime disinterestedness is associated with the idea of a certain unmanly feebleness, so that the humble hero and martyr, the one stainless character in the book, becomes in the end an object of a kind of compassionate benevolence, and impresses the reader as a person who was born to illustrate all the virtues of humanity, and to be shoved aside whenever any virtue is to be rewarded — on earth. Still the portrait is true, — cruelly true. Who, with any experience of life, has not met, loved, honored, and pitied, Tom Pinch?

But the most original, the most "stupendous" character in the romance is Mrs. Gamp, accompanied, as she is, by her other self, Mrs. Harris. It is impossible for mere criticism to do justice to this astonishing creation of humorous genius, — a creation which Dickens never afterwards surpassed, perhaps never equaled. The most elaborate and minute study of this masterpiece can hardly detect a flaw in her characteristic speech or conduct. From beginning to end she is "one entire and perfect chrysolite," — Sairey Gamp and nobody else. Forster tells us that the original hint of her character was derived from a nurse, employed by a distinguished friend of Dickens, to take charge of a sick friend. Among other "Gampish" peculiarities, she had a habit of rubbing "her nose along the top of the tall fender." This is all we know of the person who is supposed to have given the mere suggestion from which Dickens created the portly personage, as immortal as Dame Quickly or the nurse in Romeo and Juliet, and who is familiarly known in every quarter of the globe where the English language is spoken. Dickens first introduced her to the world in the nineteenth chapter of "Martin Chuzzlewit," and was impatient to know Forster's opinion of her. "Tell me," he writes, "what you think of Mrs. Gamp? you 'll not find it easy to get through the hundreds of misprints in her conversation, but I want your opinion at once. I think you know already something of mine. I mean to make a mark with her." And what a mark

[redacted]



[illegible]

[illegible] Mrs. H[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] When [illegible]

[illegible] lived in a wale, [illegible]

situation." W[illegible]

Antwerp packet [illegible]

"Ankwerks package [illegible]

confounding, [illegible]

positions of the prophet and the whale. She informs Mr. Mould, the undertaker, that "the blessing of a daughter was deniged me; which if we had had one, Gamp would certainly have drunk its little shoes right off its feet, as with our precious boy he did, and arterwards send the child a errand to sell his wooden leg for any money it would fetch as matches in the rough, and bring it home in liquor: which was truly done beyond his years, for ev'ry individgle penny that child lost at toss or buy for kidney ones; and come home arterwards quite bold, to break the news, and offering to drown himself if sech would be a satisfaction to his parents." In fact we cannot refrain, in contemplating the perfections of Mrs. Gamp, from participating in the enthusiasm of her friend the undertaker, whose business was doubtless increased by her ministrations at the sick bed. "She 's the sort of woman now," said Mr. Mould to his wife, "one would almost feel disposed to bury for nothing, and do it neatly too!" But the real distinction of Mrs. Gamp, considered as a feat of humorous characterization, consists in this, that what she says is less mirth-provoking than what she *is*. The sayings may be forgotten by the reader; but no reader ever forgets the character.

But the variety of character in "Martin Chuzzlewit" is not more notable than the felicitous way in which the characters are brought into contact or collision, so as to produce humorous scenes and incidents. The meeting of the Chuzzlewit relations in Mr. Pecksniff's parlor, when the elder Martin is supposed to be at the point of death; the dinner given by the boarders at Todgers's to Pecksniff and his daughters; the death and burial of old Anthony Chuzzlewit, with all the comically ghastly hypocrisies attending them; the interview between Mrs. Gamp and Mr. Mould; the banquet which enables Tigg Montague to introduce Jonas Chuzzlewit to Mr. Wolf, the editor, and Mr. Pip, the theatrical manager; the parting of Mrs. Gamp with Poll Sweedlepipe and Bailey Junior, as she departs for the country in charge of Lewsome; the meeting of the Chuzzlewit family on the occasion of the proposed marriage of Miss Charity Pecksniff with Mr. Augustus Moodle; the

quarrel between Mrs. Gamp and Betsey Prig; and the scene which Thackeray thought the best in the novel, that in which Pecksniff is overreached by the magnificent impostor, Tigg, in league with the coarse ruffian, his own son-in-law, — are all first-rate comedy, even if at times the comedy borders on farce. Scattered over the novel, — peeping out, here and there, when least expected, — there are felicities, of phrase or description, which give that shock of pleased surprise to the reader which betrays the hand of a master. Perhaps many of Dickens's contemporaries might have described equally well the understood connection between General Choke and Zephaniah Scadder, in the scheme to swindle young Martin out of the little money he possessed; but nobody but Dickens could have represented the General as modestly retiring from the room where the bargain was going on, seating himself in a rocking-chair in the front office, and gazing at the prospect, "like a good Samaritan, waiting for a traveller." Again, Tom Pinch, with a provincial's distrust of the knaveries of London, determines not to ask of any persons in the streets the way to Furnival's Inn, because he suspects he may become the prey of sharpers. In case, however, he should find himself near the Mint or the Bank of England, he would have no hesitation in stepping in and asking a civil question, "confiding in the perfect respectability of the concern." The absconding Augustus Moodle, in his farewell letter to Miss Pecksniff, declares to her, that "frequently — when you have sought to soothe my brow with kisses — has self-destruction flashed across me. Frequently — incredible as it may seem — have I abandoned the idea." Mrs. Gamp could pardon Betsey Prig in many things, but the words she spoke denying the existence of Mrs. Harris were such as "lambs could not forgive nor worms forget." There is something deliciously comical in the grand style assumed by the transcendental Miss Codger, when she is introduced to the Honorable Elijah Pogram. "To be presented," she solemnly declares, "*to* a Pogram *by* a Hominy, — indeed, a thrilling moment is it in its impressiveness on what we call our feelings!"

The most powerful serious passages in the romance are those devoted to Jonas Chuzzlewit, from the time he resolved to murder Tigg to the time of his capture after the murder had been committed. The sentences throb with the life of all the varying passion they record — hatred, wrath, revenge, hope, fear, and despair. Nadgett is a good specimen of the detective police that follow all the turns and windings of a criminal's course, in his external acts; but Dickens, a member of the detective police of the mind, takes his position in the soul of the criminal, observes all his emotions, thoughts, and volitions, and never intermits his steady gaze at the phenomena presented by the criminal heart, until the desire to murder, settling into the purpose to murder, finds at last expression in the outward act of murder; and then, still present as a witness of the murderer's thoughts and passions, he watches and notes all the perturbations of his soul, due not to remorse but to a craven fear of discovery. There is no space here to note other instances in the novel, where this power of observing souls is as apparent as the power of describing their external manifestations.

Dickens, when he was trying to decide on a name for his novel, discussed with Forster whether it should be Martin Sweezelder, or Sweezleback, or Sweezegag, or Martin Chuzzletoe, Chuzzleboy, Chubbelwrig, or Chuzzlewig. Chuzzlewit was selected at last. The determination to give a quaint title to the book, so that it should of itself excite attention, was carried out in the final choice.[1]

[1] The wrapper to No. 1 of the original serial edition bore the very elaborate legend: "THE LIFE AND ADVENTURES OF MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT, HIS RELATIVES, FRIENDS, AND ENEMIES, COMPRISING ALL HIS WILLS AND HIS WAYS: WITH AN HISTORICAL RECORD OF WHAT HE DID, AND WHAT HE DID N'T; SHOWING, MOREOVER, WHO INHERITED THE FAMILY PLATE, WHO CAME IN FOR THE SILVER SPOONS, AND WHO FOR THE WOODEN LADLES. THE WHOLE FORMING A COMPLETE KEY TO THE HOUSE OF CHUZZLEWIT. EDITED BY BOZ. WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY 'PHIZ.'"

II

## AMERICAN NOTES FOR GENERAL CIRCU

DICKENS sailed, or rather steamed, for the Unite early in January, 1842. During the previous six n had been one of the most radical of the English liberta ing a Tory reaction and contributing many a squib to the journals, for the purpose of aiding those wr were bent on covering the reviving Tory party with contempt, and obloquy. One of his versified invectiv "The Fine Old English Gentleman, to be said or s Conservative Dinners," is given by Forster; and it l spirit of wrath and scorn against the Tory gentry and which would not misbecome a Chartist in his wilder the pretensions put forward by the Privileged Classes. in his criticism of the United States equals it in l Indeed, in indignantly surveying the political outlo own country, he talked to his friends "of carrying of and his household gods, like Coriolanus, to a w where! Thank God," he exclaimed, "there is Van Land. That 's my comfort. Now I wonder if I sho a good settler! I wonder if I went to a new col my head, hands, legs, and health, I should force mys top of the social milk-pot, and live upon the cream do you think! Upon my word I believe I should." not be said, therefore, that he set out on his Ameri ney with any prejudice against republican institutio trouble with him was that he knew little or nothin science of government, of political economy, or of th lying laws which, with all the protests of individ a thousand various points of view, still make humo possible. Nature, in lavishing on him so many prec had seen fit to deny him either the philosophic spi philosophic mind. No man's eyes were keener tha

detect the minutest details of any subject; but the brain above the eyes, the power of generalizing details, of connecting them in their right relations, was comparatively left out in his intellectual constitution. He was a humanitarian and a humorist; one of the best and most delightful of humanitarians and humorists; but he was, in no sense, a philosopher; and to write anything about the United States in the year 1842, which was worth the consideration of thinkers, demanded powers which he did not possess. This was not the worst of it. The powers which he did possess beyond any other person then living, found but very imperfect expression in the "American Notes."

As to his lack of philosophic grasp of the subject of the United States and its institutions, two persons may be quoted, M. de Tocqueville and Macaulay. When, in the French chamber of deputies, Dickens's book on America was referred to, De Tocqueville, in reply, ridiculed the notion that any opinions of Dickens on the matter in the debate should be quoted as in any respect authoritative. This was the somewhat contemptuous judgment, passed by the philosophical author of "Democracy in America" on the author of "American Notes." Macaulay, before the work was published, wrote to Macvey Napier, the editor of the "Edinburgh Review," "I wish Dickens's book to be kept for me. I have never written a word on that subject, and I have a great deal in my head. Of course I shall be courteous to Dickens, whom I know, and whom I think both a man of genius and a good-hearted man, in spite of some faults of taste." When the volumes appeared, he gave up the idea of making them even the excuse for an article. "This morning," he writes to Napier (October 19, 1842), "I received Dickens's book. I have now read it. It is impossible for me to review it; nor do I think that you would wish me to do so. I cannot praise it, and I will not cut it up. I cannot praise it, though it contains a few lively dialogues and descriptions; for it seems to be, on the whole, a failure. It is written like the worst parts of 'Humphrey's Clock.' What is meant to be easy and sprightly is vulgar

and flippant, as in the first two pages. What is meant to be fine is a great deal too fine for me, as the description of the Fall of Niagara. A reader who wants an amusing account of the United States had better go to Mrs. Trollope, coarse and malignant as she is. A reader who wants information about American politics, manners, and literature, had better go even to so poor a creature as Buckingham. In short, I pronounce the book, in spite of some gleams of genius, at once frivolous and dull. Therefore I will not praise it. Neither will I attack it — first, because I have eaten salt with Dickens; secondly, because he is a good man, and a man of real talent; thirdly, because he hates slavery as heartily as I do; and fourthly, because I wish to see him enrolled in our blue-and-yellow corps, where he may do excellent service as a skirmisher and sharp-shooter."

Macaulay evidently hoped that Dickens's book would be good enough to afford him an opportunity of discussing the future of the United States, as far as it depended on the operation of the principle of universal suffrage. He had an almost comical horror of a government which relied for its support, not on property and the intelligence which the possession of property implies, but on a wild waste of voters the majority of whom had neither property nor intelligence. As long as there was an immense extent of unoccupied land in the country, he thought the inevitable agrarian catastrophe might be postponed; but as soon as the time came when population harshly pressed on subsistence, the voting majority would destroy civilization, or the voting minority of men of property and intelligence would destroy liberty.

Dickens, in his book, never seriously raised the question, for generalization of such compass was not his forte. Macaulay's opinions on this point are therefore to be found, not in the "Edinburgh Review," but in his letters to Mr. Randall, the biographer of Jefferson. It is curious that all the conditions which he supposes would destroy our system, either by the annihilation of property or liberty, have repeatedly arisen when financial panics have thrown the artisans and laborers of

our great cities out of employment. The voters, "told by the head," have generally gone on voting for their favorite candidates, even when ignorance and hunger combined might have been supposed inducements enough to urge them to seek relief by adopting schemes of spoliation; but their elected representatives have never dreamed of destroying property, except, occasionally, by stealing it under the forms of law The most hateful demagogues of our big cities, lifted to power by the votes of the ignorant and the indigent, are so gorged with public plunder that they would be the last of all legislators to remove a single safeguard which protects them in their ill-got gains. What they steal they naturally desire to keep; and the most conservative adherents of the principle that property is sacred, are the rough and rowdy gentlemen who control the votes of the most vicious and miserable inhabitants of our metropolitan cities. Even property in negro slaves, the most repulsive, it would seem, of all property, found its hardiest defenders in the representatives of the vilest "slums" of the city of New York. There are, on Macaulay's idea of civilization as resting fundamentally on the security of property, no more potent advocates of "Order," and no more furious assailants of the eccentric innovators who desire to make Law more and more synonymous with Justice, than those legal, respectable, well-to-do rogues, who are elected to office and power by foolish and ill-to-do constituencies. Most radical measures of improvement have their birth in country districts; the cities, which might be supposed to be centres of anarchy, are apt to be the strongholds of the stupidest conservatism; for there are no champions of property more sturdy in affirming its sacredness than those who have acquired it by chicanery and theft. Macaulay's mistake was in supposing that universal suffrage would give every uneducated, needy, miserable, or rascally person a voice in the government. In fact the votes of "the dangerous classes" are controlled by a few men, ranging from the leader of a hundred voters to the leader of a hundred thousand. A poor, ignorant, suffering, almost starving, constituency is the easiest of all constituencies for a skilful poli-

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tician, whether he be honest or dishonest, to manage. The voters are homogeneous. It is in the educated or half-educated districts of the country, among the provident people who earn their living easily, and lay up something for the possible evil day of want, that "the homogeneous," in Herbert Spencer's phrase, is most rapidly developed into "the heterogeneous" — which he considers the law of progress. There the casting of a vote represents the opinion of a man, — a will and individuality being put into the ballot-box as well as a piece of paper on which the name of a candidate is printed. In such districts the politician is troubled and bothered; he has to go through a whole course of mental gymnastics, ducking here, leaping there, torturing his intellectual frame into all kinds of twists and turns; but in the metropolis, he has only to consult with a few leaders of opinion, that is of persons who hold in their hands the votes of so-called independent citizens, and the work is done a month before the result is stated in the record of votes. There is no question that property and civilization are saved by this process, for the votes mean nothing as far as the voters are concerned, and not a single agrarian measure is advanced by the election of their candidate, whether he be a Republican or Democrat. If any confiscation of property occurs under this system, it is commonly a confiscation of the wages and comforts of the poor for the benefit of the rich.

The [illegible] of the "American Notes," dull in the sense of [illegible] "Notes" by Dickens, was due to his determination [illegible] individuals he met, and not to record [illegible] enthusiastic receptions and dinners [illegible] freely given in his honor. The subject of [illegible] on which he made eloquent speeches, [illegible] interested enemies, was also [illegible] from his book. Now what he cast [illegible] matter in his six months' journey [illegible] criticism was, [illegible] There are [illegible] here and there, — such [illegible] the emigrants he observed [illegible] between Montreal and Quebec, — which are in

his best vein; but generally the account of his adventures, by stage and steamboat, is but the disappointing record of "a most scattering and unsure observance." His genius is not there. He wrote, towards the close of his journey, to Forster, from Niagara Falls, "Oh! the sublimated essence of comicality that I *could* distil, from the materials I have!" That distilled essence of comicality he reserved for "Martin Chuzzlewit;" it is rarely to be observed in the "American Notes."

Haydon, the painter, was told by Talfourd that he introduced Dickens to the insolent Lady Holland. "She hated the Americans," according to Talfourd's statement, "and did not want Dickens to go. She said, 'Why cannot you go down to Bristol, and see some of the third or fourth class people, and they 'll do just as well?'" When Dickens decided to notice, in his book, none of the first and second class of Americans he met, but to confine himself to the third and fourth, and only to notice them except as they were his accidental companions in a not very extensive journey, it would seem as if a jaunt to Bristol *would* have done "just as well;" and that crossing the Atlantic to meet such "vulgar creatures," as My Lady would have doubtless called them, was a wasteful expenditure of time and talents.

We have therefore to seek in other quarters any adequate record of Dickens's impressions of his American journey. Forster devotes two hundred pages of the biography of his friend to the private letters he received from him; and Mr. Fields, in his delightful "Yesterdays with Authors," prints the racy letters which Dickens sent to Professor C. C. Felton, of Harvard College, during his residence in the United States, and immediately after his return to England. "How can I tell you," he writes to Forster from Boston, on January 28, 1842, "what has happened since that first day (of my arrival)? How can I give you the faintest notion of my reception here; of the crowds that pour in and out the whole day; of the people that line the streets when I go out; of the cheering when I went to the theatre; of the copies of verses, letters of congratulation, welcomes of all kinds, balls, dinners, assemblies

without end? There is to be a public dinner to me [illegible] Boston next Tuesday, and great dissatisfaction has been [illegible] to the many by the high price (three pounds sterling) of the tickets. There is to be a ball next Monday week at New York, and one hundred and fifty names appear on the list of the committee. There is to be a dinner in the same place, the same week, to which I have had an invitation, with every known name in America appended to it. . . . I have had deputations from the Far West, who have come from more than two thousand miles distance; from the lakes, the rivers, the backwoods, the log-houses, the cities, factories, villages, and towns. . . . 'It is no nonsense and no common feeling,' wrote Dr. Channing to me yesterday. 'It is all heart. There never was, and never will be, such a triumph.'" Of the men he met, he speaks warmly of the professors at the Cambridge University, Longfellow, Felton, Jared Sparks, as "noble fellows [illegible]," [illegible] Kenyon's friend, Ticknor [illegible] [illegible] Sumner [illegible] As to the people, all was [illegible] "There is [illegible] in this town, or in this State [illegible] of New England [illegible] blazing fire [illegible] every day of his life [illegible] a beggar in the streets [illegible]

somewhat by the jollity of Dickens's writings, still thought that his pictures had "a tendency to awaken sympathy with our race, and to change the unfeeling indifference which has prevailed towards the depressed multitude, into a sorrowful and indignant sensibility to their wrongs and woes."

In his progress from Boston to New York he was worried and fatigued with attentions. It was only by a hard fight with landlords that he was able to pay his bills, — the committees of the towns on his route insisting on defraying all his expenses. On the steamboat between New Haven and New York, he met again with Professor Felton, who was going on to the Dickens dinner and ball at New York. "Like most men of his class whom I have seen," Dickens writes, "he is a most delightful fellow, unaffected, hearty, genial, jolly; quite an Englishman of the best sort. We drank all the porter on board, ate all the cold pork and cheese, and were very merry indeed." It is curious to those of us who remember the late Professor Felton, not only as the most genial of men, but as a sturdy American patriot, a Greek scholar of the first rank, a President of Harvard College universally beloved by the students, to find that Dickens can only compliment him "as quite an Englishman of the best sort," whereas we are inclined to remember him as an American "of the best sort."

It was at New York that, in the midst of ovations, Dickens, irritated by newspaper comments on his speeches regarding copyright, seems to have begun to dislike his entertainers. His American friends advised him not to introduce the subject of copyright into his speeches. He appears to have attributed to cowardice what was intended by them as judicious advice. They doubtless thought the cause he advocated would be hindered rather than advanced by his appearance before the public, not as a guest of the nation whom all men were eager to honor, but as an English citizen, urging a change in the domestic policy of the United States. There is nothing that more offends the population of any country than the interference of a foreigner with its laws and institutions. Dickens seemed to think that there was something noble in the courage with

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which he put at risk his universal popularity, in order to tell the Americans, face to face, that they were guilty of injustice to himself and to his brother English authors. It is positively funny to note the grandiloquent way in which he writes to Forster. It seems that his "audacious daring" had paralyzed his friends with wonder. "The notion," he says, "that I, a man alone by himself in America, should venture to suggest to the Americans that there was one point in which they were neither just to their own countrymen nor to us, actually struck the boldest dumb. Washington Irving, Prescott, Hoffman, Bryant, Halleck, Dana, Washington Allston, every man who writes in this country is devoted to the question, and not one of them *dares* to raise his voice and complain of the atrocious state of the law. It is nothing that of all men living I am the greatest loser by it. It is nothing that I have a claim to speak and be heard. The wonder is that a breathing man can be found with temerity enough to suggest to the Americans the possibility of their having done wrong." There is something almost idiotic in nonsense like this. Some of the writers quoted are known as offenders against public opinion in matters more nearly touching the national sensibilities than the question of international copyright, and that any American author, whether first rate or fifth rate, should have ever trembled at the idea of bluntly telling his countrymen that they were wrong as to the matter of international copyright, is a proposition so absurd that one wonders how a humorist, in any possible [illegible] of his faculties, could have had the "temerity" to advance it. The only objection to Dickens's championship of the principle was this, that, under the circumstances, it was not in good taste. Had he, from the moment he arrived in the country, assailed negro slavery, and bravely expressed the convictions on that subject he has stated in his book, he might have felicitated himself on his "audacious daring," and perhaps have really stricken "the boldest" of his admirers [illegible]

Dickens early adopted a contemptuous opinion of the politics and government of the United States. "I still reserve my

opinion," he writes to Forster, "of the national character — just whispering that I tremble for a radical coming here, unless he is a radical on principle, by reason and reflection, and from the sense of right. I fear that if he were anything else, he would return home a Tory. . . . I say no more on that head for two months from this time, save that I do fear that the heaviest blow ever dealt at liberty will be dealt by this country, in the failure of its example to the earth. The scenes that are passing in Congress now, all tending to the separation of the States, fill one with such a deep disgust that I dislike the very name of Washington (meaning the place, not the man), and am repelled by the mere thought of approaching it." After the two months had expired, he writes again to Forster, praising certain qualities of the American people, but arriving at this conclusion: "I don't like the country. I would not live here, on any consideration. It goes against the grain with me. It would with you. I think it impossible, utterly impossible, for any Englishman to live here, and be happy." Individual Americans he, of course, liked. "Washington Irving," he writes, "is *a great* fellow. We have laughed most heartily together. He is just the man he ought to be. So is Dr. Channing, with whom I have had an interesting correspondence since I saw him last in Boston. Halleck is a merry little man. Washington Allston the painter (who wrote 'Monaldi') is a fine specimen of a glorious old genius. Longfellow, whose volume of poems I have got for you, is a frank, accomplished man, as well as a fine writer." Then again, writing from Washington, he says that "there are many remarkable men in the legislature, such as John Quincy Adams, Clay, Preston, Calhoun, and others: with whom I need scarcely add I have been placed in the friendliest relations. Adams is a fine old fellow — seventy-six years old, but with most surprising vigor, memory, readiness, and pluck. Clay is perfectly enchanting; an irresistible man. There are some noble specimens, too, out of the West. Splendid men to look at, hard to deceive, prompt to act, lions in energy, Crichtons in various accomplishments, Indians in quickness of eye and gesture,

Americans in affectionate and generous impulse. It would be difficult to exaggerate the nobility of some of these glorious fellows." One wonders on reading this, that he should afterwards have taken the Honorable Elijah Pogram as the type of American statesmanship. "When Clay retires," he goes on to say, "Preston will become the leader of the Whig party. He so solemnly assures me that the international copyright shall and will be passed, that I almost begin to hope; and I shall be entitled to say, if it be, that I have brought it about." Nothing can more completely show how Dickens's opinion of the country rose or fell according to the chances of its passing an international copyright bill, than the sentences we have quoted. Senator Preston, on whom he relied, was what is called a whole-souled gentleman, but still a very direct type of the slave-holder; and Calhoun, of whom he speaks in [illegible] praise, was the great logician of [illegible] [illegible]

Another [illegible] with the United States [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] of the [illegible]

*foie-gras*, and abhorring the aroma of the choicest *Lafitte* of flattery, because he had been surfeited with them. It is easy to conceive of the unhappiness of this genuine, good-natured, jovial creature, suffering from the persecution of a nation's courtesy and admiration. After he had been hardly more than a month in the country, he disconsolately wrote to Forster, from New York: "I can do nothing that I want to do, go nowhere where I want to go, and see nothing that I want to see. If I turn into the street, I am followed by a multitude. If I stay at home, the house becomes, with callers, like a fair. If I visit a public institution, with only one friend, the directors come down incontinently, waylay me in the yard, and address me in a long speech. I go to a party in the evening, and am so enclosed and hemmed about with people, stand where I will, that I am exhausted from want of air. I dine out, and have to talk about everything, to everybody. I go to church for quiet, and there is a violent rush to the neighborhood of the pew I sit in, and the clergyman preaches *at* me. I take my seat in a railroad car, and the very conductor won't leave me alone. I get out at a station, and can't drink a glass of water, without having a hundred people looking down my throat when I open my mouth to swallow. Conceive what all this is! Then by every post, letters on letters arrive, all about nothing, and all demanding an immediate answer. This man is offended because I won't live in his house; and that man is thoroughly disgusted because I won't go out more than four times in one evening. I have no rest or peace, and am in a perpetual worry." Oh! the perils and horrors of celebrity! And then the very persons who wish to drown him in an ocean of claret and champagne, or suffocate him in a crowd of well-dressed people for not one of whom does he care a sixpence, are indifferent to the theory of copyright by which he naturally hopes to derive a revenue from the sale of his works in America! It is not to be wondered at that he became, day after day, more and more antagonistic to his hosts, whether they were aristocratically urbane, or democratically ebullient; that he became spiteful, even wrathful; and that he ended in

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leaving the country in a sullen mood of discontent, and in writing about it in a way which did little credit even to his powers of observation, satire, and humor. Indeed we cannot point out in his book any passage so funny as a paragraph in one of his early letters to Forster, in which he expresses his determination to return to England in a sailing vessel. After enumerating some of the dangers of an ocean steamer, he says: "Add to all this that by day and night she is full of fire and people, that she has no boats, and that the struggling of that enormous machinery in a heavy sea seems as though it would rend her into fragments — and you may have a pretty considerable damned good sort of a feeble notion that it don't fit nohow, and that it ain't calculated to make you smart, overmuch, and that you don't feel special bright, and by no means first rate, and not all tongues (or disposed for conversation), and that however rowdy you may be by natur', it does use you up com-pletely, and that's a fact; and makes you [illegible] considerable, and disposed to damn the engine! All of which phrases, I beg to add, are pure Americanisms of the first water."

There can be no doubt that the majority of Dickens's friends and [illegible] on both sides of the Atlantic, [illegible] the "American Notes" [illegible] Lord Jeffrey, indeed, who [illegible] after he had ceased to review [illegible] of Dickens [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] of Macaulay.

[illegible]

[illegible] sort of man." But

the truth was that the book satisfied Dickens's great public of readers in no respect, whether judged as a philosophical estimate of American institutions, or as a humorous reproduction of American manners and character. It was shallow, — that might be pardoned; but it was dull, — that was unpardonable. The result was that the serial story of "Martin Chuzzlewit," which succeeded the "American Notes," and which is now rightly considered one of the best of his romances, disappointed both author and publishers, because it reached a circulation of only twenty or twenty-three thousand copies. The first journey of Dickens to the United States, in 1842, may be said to have injured him in purse and fame; the second, in 1867–68, increased his fame, and put £20,000 into his purse.

. . . . . .

On the 18th of April, 1868, four days before his departure from the United States, during his second visit to the country, a great dinner was given to him at Delmonico's, in New York. At this he made the following speech, — printed here because it contains a kind of apology for what he had written on America and the Americans: —

GENTLEMEN, — I cannot do better than take my cue from your distinguished President, and refer, in my first remarks, to his remarks, in connection with the old natural associations between you and me. When I received an invitation from a private association of working members of the Press of New York, to dine with them to-day, I accepted that compliment in grateful remembrance of a calling that was once my own, and in loyal sympathy towards a brotherhood which in spirit I have never quitted. To the wholesome training of severe newspaper work when I was a very young man I constantly refer my first successes — and my sons will hereafter testify of their father that he was always steadily proud of that ladder by which he rose. If it were otherwise I should have but a very poor opinion of their father, which perhaps — upon the whole — I have not. Thus, gentlemen, under any circumstances, this company would have been exceptionally interest-

ing and gratifying to me; but whereas I supposed that, like the fairies' pavilion of the "Arabian Nights," it would be but a mere handful, and I find it drawn out like the same elastic pavilion, capable of comprehending a multitude, so much the more proud am I of the honor of being your guest. For you will readily believe that the more widely representative of the press in America my entertainers are, the more I must feel the good will and kindly sentiments towards me of that last institution. Gentlemen, so much of my voice has lately been heard in the land, and I have for upwards of four hard winter months so contended against what I have been sometimes quite admiringly assured was a genuine American catarrh — a possession which I have throughout highly appreciated, though I might have preferred to be naturalized by any other outward or visible means — I say, gentlemen, so much of my voice has lately been heard in the land that I might have been contented not to trouble you any further from my present standing-point, were it not a duty with which I henceforth charge myself, not only here but on every suitable occasion whatsoever and wheresoever, to express my high and grateful sense of my recent reception in America, and to bear my honest testimony to the national generosity and magnanimity. Also, to declare how astounded I have been by the amazing changes that I have seen around me on every side. Changes moral, changes physical, changes in the amount of land subdued and cultivated, changes in the size of vast new cities, changes in the growth of older cities, changes of recognition, changes in the growth of the graces and amenities of life, changes in the press — without whose advancement no advancement can take place anywhere. Nor am I, believe me, so arrogant as to suppose that in five and twenty years there have been no changes in me, except that I had nothing to learn and no extreme impressionability which I was here first. And, gentlemen, this [illegible] which I have, ever since I landed here last Monday, preserved a strict silence, though sometimes tempted to break it, and in reference to it I will, with your good leave, take you into my confidence now. Even the press,

being human, may be sometimes mistaken or misinformed — and I rather think that I have, in one or two rare instances, known its information to be not perfectly correct with reference to myself. Indeed, I have now and again been more surprised by printed news that I have read of myself than by any printed news that I have ever read in my present state of existence. Thus it appears strange to me to be informed of the vigor and perseverance with which I have for some months been "collecting materials for and hammering away at a new book on America," seeing that all that time it has been perfectly well known to my publishers, on both sides of the Atlantic, that I positively declared that no consideration on earth should induce me to write one. But what I have intended, what I have resolved upon, and this is the confidence I seek to place in you, is that on my return to England, in my own English journal, manfully, promptly, plainly in my own person to bear for the behalf of my countrymen, such testimony to the gigantic changes in this country as I have hinted at to-night. Also to record that wherever I have been, in the smallest places equally with the largest, I have been received with unsurpassable politeness, delicacy, sweet temper, hospitality, consideration, and with unsurpassable respect for the privacy daily enforced upon me by the nature of my avocation here and the state of my health. This testimony, so long as I live, and so long as my descendants have any legal right in my books, I shall cause to be republished as an appendix to every copy of those two books of mine in which I have referred to America. And this I will do, and cause to be done, not in mere love and thankfulness, but because I regard it as an act of plain justice and honor. Gentlemen, this transition from my own feelings towards, and interest in America, to those of the mass of my countrymen, seems to me but a natural one; whether or not it is so, I make it an express object. I was asked in this very city, about last Christmas time, whether an American was not at some disadvantage in England as a foreigner? The notion of an American being regarded as a foreigner at all — of his ever being thought of

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or spoken of in that character, was so uncommonly [illegible] and absurd to me that my gravity was for a moment [illegible] overpowered. As soon as it was restored, I said that for years and years past I had hoped I had had as many Ame[illegible] friends and received as many American visitors as [illegible] Englishman living, and that my unvaried experience [illegible] by others, was that it was enough in England to be an American to be received with the most earnest respect and [illegible] anywhere. Thereupon, out of half a dozen people [illegible] denly spoke out but two. One, an American gentleman [illegible] cultivated taste for art, who, finding himself, on a certain [illegible] day, outside the wall of a certain historical English [illegible], famous for its pictures, was refused admission there [illegible] to the strict rules of the place on that day, but [illegible] representing that he was an American gentleman [illegible], he had not only the picture gallery but the whole [illegible] of his [illegible] The other was a lady [illegible] London, [illegible] great desire to see the [illegible] room of the British Museum, [illegible] family with [illegible] sible, because [illegible] a week, and [illegible] only three days there [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] great achievements

throughout the world. If I know anything of my countrymen, and they give me the credit of knowing something of them, the English heart is stirred by the fluttering of these Stars and Stripes, as it is stirred by no other flag that floats, except its own. If I know my countrymen, in any and every relation towards America, they begin, not as Sir Anthony Absolute recommended lovers to begin, with a little aversion, but with great liking and a profound respect, and whatever may be the sensitiveness of the moment, or the little official passion, or the little official policy, now or then, or here or there, take my word for it, that the first enduring great popular consideration in England is, a generous construction of justice. Finally, gentlemen, I say this, subject to your correction, I do believe that from the great majority of honest minds on both sides, there cannot be absent the conviction that it would be better for this globe to be riven by an earthquake, fired by a comet, or overrun by an iceberg, and abandoned to the arctic fox and bear, than that it should present the spectacle of these two great nations, each of which has, in its own way and hour, striven so hard and so successfully for freedom, ever again being arrayed the one against the other. Gentlemen, I cannot thank your President enough, and you enough, for your kind response to my health, and my poor remarks. But believe me, I do thank you with the utmost fervor of which my soul is capable.

# PREFACES AND DEDICATIONS

## I

## LIFE AND ADVENTURES OF MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT

### PREFACE TO FIRST EDITION

I ATTACH a few preliminary words to the "Life and Adventures of Martin Chuzzlewit:" more because I am unwilling to depart from any custom which has become endeared to me by having prevailed between myself and my readers on former occasions of the same kind, than because I have anything in particular to say.

Like a troublesome guest who lingers in the Hall after he has taken leave, I cannot help loitering on the threshold of my book, though these two words, The End, anticipated through twenty months, yet sorrowfully penned at last, stare at me, in capitals, from the printed page.

I set out, on this journey which is now concluded, with the design of exhibiting, in various aspects, the commonest of all the vices. It is almost needless to add, that the commoner the folly or the crime which an author endeavors to illustrate, the greater is the risk he runs of being charged with exaggeration, for as no man ever yet recognized an imitation of himself, no man will admit the correctness of a sketch in which his own character is delineated, however faithfully.

But, although Mr. Pecksniff will by no means concede to me that Mr. Pecksniff is natural, I am consoled by finding him keenly susceptible of the truthfulness of Mrs. Gamp. And though Mrs. Gamp considers her portrait to be quite unlike, and altogether out of drawing, she recompenses me for the severity of her criticism on that failure, by awarding unbounded praise to the picture of Mrs. Prig.

I have endeavored, in the progress of this Tale, to resist the temptation of the current Monthly Number, and to keep a steadier eye upon the general purpose and design. With this object in view, I have put a strong constraint upon myself from time to time, in many places; and I hope the story is the better for it now.

At any rate, if my readers have derived but half the pleasure and interest from its perusal which its composition has afforded me, I have ample reason to be gratified. And if they part from any of my visionary friends with the least tinge of that reluctance and regret which I feel in dismissing them, my success has been complete, indeed.

LONDON, Twenty-fifth June, 1844.

## PREFACE TO EDITION OF 1850

MY main object in this story was, to exhibit in a variety of aspects the commonest of all the vices; to show how Selfishness propagates itself; and to what a grim giant it may grow, from small beginnings.

All the Pecksniff family upon earth are quite agreed, I believe, that no such character as Mr. Pecksniff ever existed. I will not offer any plea on his behalf to so powerful and genteel a body, but I wish to make a remark here on the character of Jonas Chuzzlewit.

I conceive that the sordid coarseness and brutality of Jonas would be unnatural, if there had been nothing in his early education, and in the precept and example always before him, to engender and develop the vices that make him odious. But, so born and so bred; admired for that which made him hateful, and justified from his cradle in cunning, treachery, and avarice; I claim him as the legitimate issue of the father upon whom those vices are seen to recoil. And I submit that their recoil upon that old man, in his unhonored age, is not a mere piece of poetical justice, but is the extreme exposition of a plain truth.

I make this comment on the character, and solicit the

reader's attention to it in his or her consideration of t[illegible] because nothing is more common in real life than a [illegible] profitable reflection on the causes of many vices and [illegible] that awaken the general horror. What is substantially [illegible] families in this respect, is true of a whole commonweal[illegible] we sow, we reap. Let the reader go into the childr[illegible] of any prison in England, or, I grieve to add, of m[illegible] houses, and judge whether those are monsters who d[illegible] streets, people our hulks and penitentiaries, and over[illegible] penal colonies, or are creatures whom we have d[illegible] suffered to be bred for misery and ruin.

The American portion of this book is in no other r[illegible] caricature than as it is an exhibition, for the most part [illegible] ludicrous side of the American character—of that s[illegible] is, from its very nature, the most obtrusive, and t[illegible] likely to be seen by such travellers as Young Martin [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible]

dem[illegible]strations [illegible] hostility towards England [illegible] ties ran rampant, that, having the [illegible] I ridiculed them. And [illegible] wards America, but just as I [illegible]

if the same opportunity had arisen, in reference to London, or Dublin, or Paris, or Devonshire.

In all the tales comprised in this cheap series, and in all my writings, I hope I have taken every possible opportunity of showing the want of sanitary improvements in the neglected dwellings of the poor. Mrs. Sarah Gamp is a representation of the hired attendant on the poor in sickness. The Hospitals of London are, in many respects, noble Institutions; in others, very defective. I think it not the least among the instances of their mismanagement, that Mrs. Betsey Prig is a fair specimen of a Hospital Nurse; and that the Hospitals, with their means and funds, should have left it to private humanity and enterprise, in the year Eighteen Hundred and Forty-nine, to enter on an attempt to improve that class of persons.

London, November, 1849.

## DEDICATION

TO

## MISS BURDETT COUTTS,

**This Tale**

IS DEDICATED,

WITH THE TRUE AND EARNEST REGARD

OF

THE AUTHOR.

## II

## AMERICAN NOTES

**Mr. Forster states in his "Life of Dickens" that the f lowing chapter, which he prints, was written by Dickens a preliminary chapter to "American Notes," but that after conference it was decided that it had best be omitted, thou Dickens was brought very reluctantly to this conclusion.**

### INTRODUCTORY: AND NECESSARY TO BE READ

I HAVE placed the foregoing title at the head of this pa because I challenge and deny the right of any person to p judgment on this book, or to arrive at any reasonable conc sion in reference to it, without first being at the trouble becoming acquainted with its design and purpose.

It is not statistical. Figures of arithmetic have already b heaped upon America's devoted head, almost as lavishly as ures of speech have been piled above Shakespeare's grave.

It comprehends no small talk concerning individuals, and violation of the social confidences of private life. The v prevalent practice of kidnapping live ladies and gentlem forcing them into cabinets, and labelling and ticketing th whether they will or no, for the gratification of the idle the curious, is not to my taste. Therefore I have avoided it

It has not a grain of any political ingredient in its wh composition.

Neither does it contain, nor have I intended that it sho contain, any lengthened and minute account of my perso reception in the United States: not because I am, or ever w insensible to that spontaneous effusion of affection and ger osity of heart, in a most affectionate and generous-hear people, but because I conceive that it would ill become me flourish matter necessarily involving so much of my own prais in the eyes of my unhappy readers

This book is simply what it claims to be — a record of

impressions I received from day to day, during my hasty travels in America, and sometimes (but not always) of the conclusions to which they, and after-reflection on them, have led me; a description of the country I passed through; of the institutions I visited; of the kind of people among whom I journeyed; and of the manners and customs that came within my observation. Very many works having just the same scope and range have been already published, but I think that these two volumes stand in need of no apology on that account. The interest of such productions, if they have any, lies in the varying impressions made by the same novel things on different minds; and not in new discoveries or extraordinary adventures.

I can scarcely be supposed to be ignorant of the hazard I run in writing of America at all. I know perfectly well that there is, in that country, a numerous class of well-intentioned persons prone to be dissatisfied with all accounts of the Republic whose citizens they are, which are not couched in terms of exalted and extravagant praise. I know perfectly well that there is in America, as in most other places laid down in maps of the great world, a numerous class of persons so tenderly and delicately constituted that they cannot bear the truth in any form. And I do not need the gift of prophecy to discern afar off, that they who will be aptest to detect malice, ill will, and all uncharitableness in these pages, and to show, beyond any doubt, that they are perfectly inconsistent with that grateful and enduring recollection which I profess to entertain of the welcome I found awaiting me beyond the Atlantic — will be certain native journalists, veracious and gentlemanly, who were at great pains to prove to me, on all occasions during my stay there, that the aforesaid welcome was utterly worthless.

But, venturing to dissent even from these high authorities, I formed my own opinion of its value in the outset, and retain it to this hour; and in asserting (as I invariably did on all public occasions) my liberty and freedom of speech while I was among the Americans, and in maintaining it at home, I believe that I best show my sense of the high worth of that welcome, and of the honorable singleness of purpose with which it was

extended to me. From first to last I saw, in the friends who crowded round me in America, old readers, over-grateful and over-partial perhaps, to whom I had happily been the means of furnishing pleasure and entertainment; not a vulgar herd who would flatter and cajole a stranger into turning with closed eyes from all the blemishes of the nation, and into chanting its praises with the discrimination of a street ballad-singer. From first to last I saw, in those hospitable hands, a home-made wreath of laurel; and not an iron muzzle disguised beneath a flower or two.

Therefore I take — and hold myself not only justified in taking, but bound to take — the plain course of saying what I think, and noting what I saw; and as it is not my custom to exalt what in my judgment are foibles and abuses at home, so I have no intention of softening down, or glozing over, those that I have observed abroad.

If this book should fall into the hands of any sensitive American who cannot bear to be told that the working of the institutions of his country is far from perfect; that in spite of the advantage she has over all other nations in the elastic freshness and vigor of her youth, she is far from being a model for the earth to copy; and that even in those pictures of the national manners with which he quarrels most, there is still (after a lapse of several years, each of which may be fairly supposed to have had its stride in improvement) much that is just and true at this hour; let him lay it down, now, for I shall not please him. Of the intelligent, reflecting, and educated among his countrymen I have no fear, for I have ample reason to believe, after many delightful conversations not easily to be forgotten, that there are very few topics (if any) on which their sentiments differ materially from mine.

It may be asked — "If you have been in any respect disappointed in America, and are assured beforehand that the expression of your disappointment will give offence to any class, why do you write at all?" My answer is, that I went there expecting greater things than I found, and resolved as far as in me lay to do justice to the country, at the expense of any

(in my view) mistaken or prejudiced statements that might have been made to its disparagement. Coming home with a corrected and sobered judgment, I consider myself no less bound to do justice to what, according to my best means of judgment, I found to be the truth.

There was no Preface to the first edition, which was introduced by the following

## DEDICATION

To those friends of mine in America who, giving me a welcome I must ever proudly remember, left my judgment free, and who, loving their country, can hear the truth when it is told good-humoredly and in a kind spirit.

## PREFACE TO EDITION OF 1850

It is nearly eight years since this book was first published. I present it, unaltered, in the Cheap Edition; and such of my opinions as it expresses, are quite unaltered too.

My readers have opportunities of judging for themselves whether the influences and tendencies which I distrust in America have any existence but in my imagination. They can examine for themselves whether there has been anything in the public career of that country during the past eight years, or whether there is anything in its present condition, at home or abroad, which suggests that those influences and tendencies really do exist. As they find the fact, they will judge me. If they discern any evidences of wrong-doing, in any direction that I have indicated, they will acknowledge that I have reason in what I wrote. If they discern no such thing, they will consider me altogether mistaken.

Prejudiced I have never been, otherwise than in favor of the United States. No visitor can ever have set foot on those shores, with a stronger faith in the Republic than I had, when I landed in America.

I purposely abstain from extending these observations to any

length. I have nothing to defend, or to explain away. truth is the truth; and neither childish absurdities, n scrupulous contradictions, can make it otherwise. The would still move round the sun, though the whole C Church said No.

I have many friends in America, and feel a grateful r in the country. To represent me as viewing it with ill-n animosity, or partisanship, is merely to do a very foolish which is always a very easy one; and which I have disre for eight years, and could disregard for eighty more.

London, 23d June, 1850.

# LIFE AND ADVENTURES

OF

# MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTORY, CONCERNING THE PEDIGREE OF THE CHUZZLEWIT FAMILY.

As no lady or gentleman, with any claims to polite breeding, can possibly sympathise with the Chuzzlewit Family without being first assured of the extreme antiquity of the race, it is a great satisfaction to know that it undoubtedly descended in a direct line from Adam and Eve; and was, in the very earliest times, closely connected with the agricultural interest. If it should ever be urged by grudging and malicious persons that a Chuzzlewit, in any period of the family history, displayed an overweening amount of family pride, surely the weakness will be considered not only pardonable but laudable, when the immense superiority of the house to the rest of mankind, in respect of this its ancient origin, is taken into account.

It is remarkable that as there was, in the oldest family of which we have any record, a murderer and a vagabond, so we never fail to meet, in the records of all old families, with innumerable repetitions of the same phase of character. Indeed, it may be laid down as a general principle that the more extended the ancestry, the greater the amount of violence and vagabondism; for in ancient days, those two amusements, combining a wholesome excitement with a promising means of repairing shattered fortunes, were at once the ennobling pursuit and the healthful recreation of the Quality of this land.

Consequently, it is a source of inexpressible comfort and fitness to find that, in various periods of our history, the

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Chuzzlewits were actively connected with divers slaughterous conspiracies and bloody frays. It is further recorded of them, that, being clad from head to heel in steel of proof, they [illegible] many occasions lead their leather-jerkined soldiers to the death, with invincible courage, and afterwards return home gracef[illegible] to their relations and friends.

There can be no doubt that at least one Chuzzlewit [illegible] over with William the Conqueror. It does not appear that this illustrious ancestor "came over" that monarch, to employ the vulgar phrase, at any subsequent period; inasmuch as the Family do not seem to have been ever greatly distinguished by the possession of landed estate. And it is well known that for the bestowal of that kind of property upon his favourites, the liberality and gratitude of the Norman were as remarkable as those virtues are usually found to be in great men when they give away what belongs to other people.

Perhaps [illegible] the history may pause [illegible] itself [illegible] amount of bravery, w[illegible] virtue, [illegible] that appears [illegible] come [illegible] England with the Norman Invasion [illegible] which the [illegible] family [illegible] swell, [illegible] to be [illegible] even [illegible] William the Conqueror had been W[illegible] Conquered [illegible]

[illegible]

month, continued gloomily to watch a small stock of coals, without, in any one instance, negotiating with a purchaser. The remarkable similarity between this course of proceeding and that adopted by their Great Ancestor beneath the vaults of the Parliament House at Westminster is too obvious and too full of interest to stand in need of comment.

It is also clearly proved by the oral traditions of the Family, that there existed, at some one period of its history which is not distinctly stated, a matron of such destructive principles, and so familiarised to the use and composition of inflammatory and combustible engines, that she was called "The Match Maker," by which nickname and byword she is recognised in the Family legends to this day. Surely there can be no reasonable doubt that this was the Spanish lady, the mother of Chuzzlewit Fawkes.

But there is one other piece of evidence, bearing immediate reference to their close connection with this memorable event in English History, which must carry conviction, even to a mind (if such a mind there be) remaining unconvinced by these presumptive proofs.

There was, within a few years, in the possession of a highly respectable and in every way credible and unimpeachable member of the Chuzzlewit Family (for his bitterest enemy never dared to hint at his being otherwise than a wealthy man), a dark lantern of undoubted antiquity; rendered still more interesting by being, in shape and pattern, extremely like such as are in use at the present day. Now, this gentleman, since deceased, was at all times ready to make oath, and did again and again set forth, upon his solemn asseveration, that he had frequently heard his grandmother say, when contemplating this venerable relic, "Ay, ay! This was carried by my fourth son on the fifth of November, when he was a Guy Fawkes." These remarkable words wrought (as well they might) a strong impression on his mind, and he was in the habit of repeating them very often. The just interpretation which they bear, and the conclusion to which they lead, are triumphant and irresistible. The old lady, naturally strong-minded, was nevertheless frail and fading; she was notoriously subject to that confusion of ideas, or, to say the least, of speech, to which age and garrulity are liable. The slight, the very slight confusion, apparent in these expressions, is manifest,

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and is ludicrously easy of correction. "Ay, ay," quoth she, and it will be observed that no emendation whatever is necessary to be made in these two initiative remarks. "Ay, ay! This lantern was carried by my forefather"—not fourth son, which is preposterous—"on the fifth of November. And he was Guy Fawkes." Here we have a remark at once consistent, clear, natural, and in strict accordance with the character of the speaker. Indeed, the anecdote is so plainly susceptible of this meaning, and no other, that it would be hardly worth recording in its original state were it not a proof of what may be (and very often is) effected, not only in historical prose, but in imaginative poetry, by the exercise of a little ingenious labour on the part of a commentator.

It has been said that there is no instance in modern times of a Chuzzlewit having been found on terms of intimacy with the Great. But here again the sneering detractors who weave such miserable figments from their malicious brains, are stricken dumb by evidence. For letters are yet in the [illegible]

[illegible] and his answers were taken down at the

time, and signed by six witnesses, each with his name and address in full: "The Lord No Zoo." It may be said — it *has* been said, for human wickedness has no limits — that there is no Lord of that name, and that, among the titles which have become extinct, none at all resembling this, in sound even, is to be discovered. But what is the irresistible inference? Rejecting a theory broached by some well-meaning but mistaken persons, that this Mr. Toby Chuzzlewit's grandfather, to judge from his name, must surely have been a Mandarin (which is wholly insupportable, for there is no pretence of his grandmother ever having been out of this country, or of any Mandarin having been in it, within some years of his father's birth, except those in the tea-shops, which cannot for a moment be regarded as having any bearing on the question, one way or other); rejecting this hypothesis, is it not manifest that Mr. Toby Chuzzlewit had either received the name imperfectly from his father, or that he had forgotten it, or that he had mispronounced it; and that, even at the recent period in question, the Chuzzlewits were connected by a bend sinister, or kind of heraldic over-the-left, with some unknown noble and illustrious House?

From documentary evidence, yet preserved in the family, the fact is clearly established that, in the comparatively modern days of the Diggory Chuzzlewit before mentioned, one of its members had attained to very great wealth and influence. Throughout such fragments of his correspondence as have escaped the ravages of the moths (who, in right of their extensive absorption of the contents of deeds and papers, may be called the general registers of the Insect World), we find him making constant reference to an uncle, in respect of whom he would seem to have entertained great expectations, as he was in the habit of seeking to propitiate his favour by presents of plate, jewels, books, watches, and other valuable articles. Thus, he writes on one occasion to his brother in reference to a gravy-spoon, the brother's property, which he (Diggory) would appear to have borrowed or otherwise possessed himself of: "Do not be angry; I have parted with it — to my uncle." On another occasion he expresses himself in a similar manner with regard to a child's mug which had been entrusted to him to get repaired. On another occasion he says, "I have bestowed upon that irresistible uncle of mine everything I ever

possessed." And that he was in the habit of paying long and constant visits to this gentleman at his mansion, if, indeed, he did not wholly reside there, is manifest from the following sentence: "With the exception of the suit of clothes I carry about with me, the whole of my wearing apparel is at present at my uncle's." This gentleman's patronage and influence must have been very extensive, for his nephew writes, "His interest is too high" — "It is too much" — "It is tremendous" — and the like. Still it does not appear (which is strange) to have procured for him any lucrative post at court or elsewhere, or to have conferred upon him any other distinction than that which was necessarily included in the countenance of so great a man, and the being invited by him to certain entertainments, so splendid and costly in their nature that he emphatically calls them "Golden Balls."

It is needless to multiply instances of the high and lofty station, and the vast importance of the Chuzzlewits, at different periods. If it came within the scope of reasonable probability that further proofs were required, they might be heaped upon each other until they formed an Alps of testimony, beneath which the boldest scepticism should be crushed and beaten flat. As a goodly tumulus is already collected, and decently battened up above the Family grave, the present chapter is content to leave it as it is; merely adding, by way of a final spadeful, that many Chuzzlewits, both male and female, are proved to demonstration, on the faith of letters written by their own mothers, to have had chiselled noses, undeniable chins, forms that might have served the sculptor for a model, exquisitely turned limbs, and polished foreheads of so transparent a texture that the blue veins might be seen branching off in various directions, like so many roads on an ethereal map. This fact in itself, though it had been a solitary one, would have utterly settled and clenched the business in hand; for it is well known, on the authority of all the books which treat of such matters, that every one of these phenomena, but especially that of the chiselling, are invariably peculiar to, and only make themselves apparent in, persons of the very best condition.

This history, having, to its own perfect satisfaction (and, consequently, to the full contentment of all its readers) proved the Chuzzlewits to have had an origin, and to have been at one time or other of an importance which cannot fail to render

them highly improving and acceptable acquaintance to all right-minded individuals, may now proceed in earnest with its task. And having shown that they must have had, by reason of their ancient birth, a pretty large share in the foundation and increase of the human family, it will one day become its province to submit that such of its members as shall be introduced in these pages have still many counterparts and prototypes in the Great World about us. At present it contents itself with remarking, in a general way, on this head: Firstly, that it may be safely asserted, and yet without implying any direct participation in the Monboddo doctrine touching the probability of the human race having once been monkeys, that men do play very strange and extraordinary tricks. Secondly, and yet without trenching on the Blumenbach theory as to the descendants of Adam having a vast number of qualities which belong more particularly to swine than to any other class of animals in the creation, that some men certainly are remarkable for taking uncommon good care of themselves.

## CHAPTER II

**WHEREIN CERTAIN PERSONS ARE PRESENTED TO THE READER, WITH WHOM HE MAY, IF HE PLEASE, BECOME BETTER ACQUAINTED.**

It was pretty late in the autumn of the year, when the declining sun, struggling through the mist which had obscured it all day, looked brightly down upon a little Wiltshire village, within an easy journey of the fair old town of Salisbury.

Like a sudden flash of memory or spirit kindling up the mind of an old man, it shed a glory upon the scene, in which its departed youth and freshness seemed to live again. The wet grass sparkled in the light; the scanty patches of verdure in the hedges — where a few green twigs yet stood together bravely, resisting to the last the tyranny of nipping winds and early frosts — took heart and brightened up; the stream which had been dull and sullen all day long, broke out into a cheerful smile; the birds began to chirp and twitter on the naked boughs, as though the hopeful creatures half believed that winter had gone by and spring had come already. The vane upon the tapering spire of the old church glistened from its lofty station [illegible]

[illegible]

a graceful pattern in the stubbled fields. On the motionless branches of some trees, autumn berries hung like clusters of coral beads, as in those fabled orchards where the fruits were jewels; others, stripped of all their garniture, stood, each the centre of its little heap of bright red leaves, watching their slow decay; others again, still wearing theirs, had them all crunched and crackled up, as though they had been burnt; about the stems of some were piled, in ruddy mounds, the apples they had borne that year; while others (hardy evergreens, this class) showed somewhat stern and gloomy in their vigour, as charged by nature with the admonition that it is not to her more sensitive and joyous favourites she grants the longest term of life. Still athwart their darker boughs, the sunbeams struck out paths of deeper gold; and the red light, mantling in among their swarthy branches, used them as foils to set its brightness off, and aid the lustre of the dying day.

A moment, and its glory was no more. The sun went down beneath the long dark lines of hill and cloud which piled up in the west an airy city, wall heaped on wall, and battlement on battlement; the light was all withdrawn; the shining church turned cold and dark; the stream forgot to smile; the birds were silent; and the gloom of winter dwelt on everything.

An evening wind uprose, too, and the slighter branches cracked and rattled as they moved in skeleton dances, to its moaning music. The withering leaves, no longer quiet, hurried to and fro in search of shelter from its chill pursuit; the labourer unyoked his horses, and, with head bent down, trudged briskly home beside them; and from the cottage windows lights began to glance and wink upon the darkening fields.

Then the village forge came out in all its bright importance. The lusty bellows roared ha, ha! to the clear fire which roared in turn, and bade the shining sparks dance gaily to the merry clinking of the hammers on the anvil. The gleaming iron, in its emulation, sparkled, too, and shed its red-hot gems around profusely. The strong smith and his men dealt such strokes upon their work as made even the melancholy night rejoice, and brought a glow into its dark face as it hovered about the door and windows, peeping curiously in above the shoulders of a dozen loungers. As to this idle company, there they stood, spell-bound by the place, and, casting now and then a glance upon the darkness in their rear, settled their lazy elbows more

at ease upon the sill, and leaned a little further in, no more disposed to tear themselves away than if they had been born to cluster round the blazing hearth like so many crickets.

Out upon the angry wind! how from sighing, it began to bluster round the merry forge, banging at the wicket, and grumbling in the chimney, as if it bullied the jolly bellows for doing anything to order. And what an impotent swaggerer it was, too, for all its noise; for if it had any influence on that hoarse companion, it was but to make him roar his cheerful song the louder, and by consequence to make the fire burn the brighter, and the sparks to dance more gaily yet. At length, they whizzed so madly round and round that it was too much for such a surly wind to bear, so off it flew with a howl, giving the old sign before the alehouse-door such a cuff as it went that the Blue Dragon was more rampant than usual ever afterwards, and, indeed, before Christmas, reared clean out of his crazy frame.

It was small tyranny for a respectable wind to go wreaking its vengeance on such poor creatures as the fallen leaves, but this wind, happening to come up with a great heap of them just after venting its humour on the insulted Dragon, did so disperse and scatter them that they fled away, pell-mell, some here, some there, rolling over each other, whirling round and round upon their thin edges, taking frantic flights into the air, and playing all manner of extraordinary gambols in the extremity of their distress. Nor was this enough for its malicious fury; for not content with driving them abroad, it charged small parties of them and hunted them into the wheelwright's saw-pit, and below the planks and timbers in the yard, and, scattering the sawdust in the air, it looked for them underneath, and when it did meet with any, whew! how it drove them on and followed at their heels!

The scared leaves only flew the faster for all this, and a giddy chase it was; for they got into unfrequented places, where there was no outlet, and where their pursuer kept them eddying round and round at his pleasure; and they crept under the eaves of houses, and clung tightly to the sides of hay-ricks, like bats; and tore in at open chamber windows, and cowered close to hedges; and, in short, went anywhere for safety. But the oddest feat they achieved was, to take advantage of the sudden opening of Mr Pecksniff's front-door, to dash wildly

into his passage; whither the wind following close upon them, and finding the back-door open, incontinently blew out the lighted candle held by Miss Pecksniff, and slammed the front-door against Mr. Pecksniff who was at that moment entering, with such violence, that in the twinkling of an eye he lay on his back at the bottom of the steps. Being by this time weary of such trifling performances, the boisterous rover hurried away rejoicing, roaring over moor and meadow, hill and flat, until it got out to sea, where it met with other winds similarly disposed, and made a night of it.

In the mean time Mr. Pecksniff, having received, from a sharp angle in the bottom step but one, that sort of knock on the head which lights up for the patient's entertainment an imaginary general illumination of very bright short-sixes, lay placidly staring at his own street-door. And it would seem to have been more suggestive in its aspect than street-doors usually are, for he continued to lie there rather a lengthy and unreasonable time, without so much as wondering whether he was hurt or no; neither when Miss Pecksniff inquired through the keyhole in a shrill voice, which might have belonged to a wind in its teens, "Who 's there?" did he make any reply; nor when Miss Pecksniff opened the door again, and, shading the candle with her hand, peered out, and looked provokingly round him, and about him, and over him, and everywhere but at him, did he offer any remark, or indicate in any manner the least hint of a desire to be picked up.

"*I* see you," cried Miss Pecksniff, to the ideal inflicter of a runaway knock. "You 'll catch it, sir!"

Still Mr. Pecksniff, perhaps from having caught it already, said nothing.

"You 're round the corner now," cried Miss Pecksniff. She said it at a venture, but there was appropriate matter in it, too; for Mr. Pecksniff, being in the act of extinguishing the candles before mentioned pretty rapidly, and of reducing the number of brass knobs on his street-door from four or five hundred (which had previously been juggling of their own accord before his eyes in a very novel manner) to a dozen or so, might in one sense have been said to be coming round the corner, and just turning it.

With a sharply delivered warning relative to the cage and the constable, and the stocks and the gallows, Miss Pecksniff

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[illegible] about to close the door again, when Mr. Pecksniff (being still at the bottom of the steps) raised himself on one elbow, and sneezed.

"That voice!" cried Miss Pecksniff. "My parent!"

At this exclamation, another Miss Pecksniff bounced out of the parlour; and the two Miss Pecksniffs, with many incoherent expressions, dragged Mr. Pecksniff into an upright posture.

"Pa!" they cried in concert. "Pa! Speak, Pa! Do not look so wild, my dearest Pa!"

But as a gentleman's looks, in such a case of all others, are by no means under his own control, Mr. Pecksniff continued to keep his mouth and his eyes very wide open, and to drop his lower jaw, somewhat after the manner of a toy nut-cracker; and as his hat had fallen off, and his face was pale, and his hair erect, and his coat muddy, the spectacle he presented was so very doleful that neither of the Miss Pecksniffs could repress an involuntary scream.

"That'll do," said Mr. Pecksniff. "I'm better."

"He's come to himself!" cried the youngest Miss Pecksniff.

"He speaks again!" [illegible]

[illegible]

the youngest Miss Pecksniff was so young as to be, as one may say, forced to sit upon a stool, by reason of the shortness of her legs. Miss Pecksniff sat upon a stool, because of her simplicity and innocence, which were very great, very great. Miss Pecksniff sat upon a stool, because she was all girlishness, and playfulness, and wildness, and kittenish buoyancy. She was the most arch and at the same time the most artless creature, was the youngest Miss Pecksniff, that you can possibly imagine. It was her great charm. She was too fresh and guileless, and too full of child-like vivacity, was the youngest Miss Pecksniff, to wear combs in her hair, or to turn it up, or to frizzle it, or braid it. She wore it in a crop, a loosely flowing crop, which had so many rows of curls in it that the top row was only one curl. Moderately buxom was her shape, and quite womanly, too; but sometimes — yes, sometimes — she even wore a pinafore; and how charming *that* was! Oh! she was, indeed, "a gushing thing" (as a young gentleman had observed in verse, in the Poet's Corner of a provincial newspaper), was the youngest Miss Pecksniff!

Mr. Pecksniff was a moral man, a grave man, a man of noble sentiments and speech; and he had had her christened Mercy. Mercy! oh, what a charming name for such a pure-souled Being as the youngest Miss Pecksniff! Her sister's name was Charity. There was a good thing! Mercy and Charity! And Charity, with her fine, strong sense, and her mild, yet not reproachful gravity, was so well named, and did so well set off and illustrate her sister! What a pleasant sight was that, the contrast they presented: to see each loved and loving one sympathising with, and devoted to, and leaning on, and yet correcting and counter-checking, and, as it were, anti-doting, the other! To behold each damsel, in her very admiration of her sister, setting up in business for herself on an entirely different principle, and announcing no connection with over-the-way, and if the quality of goods at that establishment don't please you, you are respectfully invited to favour ME with a call! And the crowning circumstance of the whole delightful catalogue was that both the fair creatures were so utterly unconscious of all this! They had no idea of it. They no more thought or dreamed of it than Mr. Pecksniff did. Nature played them off against each other; *they* had no hand in it, the two Miss Pecksniffs.

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It has been remarked that Mr. Pecksniff was a moral man. So he was. Perhaps there never was a more moral man than Mr. Pecksniff; especially in his conversation and correspondence. It was once said of him by a homely admirer that he had a Fortunatus's purse of good sentiments in his inside. In this particular he was like the girl in the fairy tale, except that, if they were not actual diamonds which fell from his lips, they were the very brightest paste, and shone prodigiously. He was a most exemplary man, fuller of virtuous precept than a copy-book. Some people likened him to a direction-post, which is always telling the way to a place, and never goes there; but these were his enemies, the shadows cast by his brightness; that was all. His very throat was moral. You saw a good deal of it. You looked over a very low fence of white cravat (whereof no man had ever beheld the tie, for he fastened it behind), and there it lay, a valley between two jutting heights of collar, serene and whiskerless before you. [illegible]

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a strictly architectural employment. His genius lay in ensnaring parents and guardians, and pocketing premiums. A young gentleman's premium being paid, and the young gentleman come to Mr. Pecksniff's house, Mr. Pecksniff borrowed his case of mathematical instruments (if silver-mounted or otherwise valuable); entreated him, from that moment, to consider himself one of the family; complimented him highly on his parents or guardians, as the case might be; and turned him loose in a spacious room on the two-pair front, where, in the company of certain drawing-boards, parallel rulers, very stiff-legged compasses, and two, or perhaps three, other young gentlemen, he improved himself, for three or five years, according to his articles, in making elevations of Salisbury Cathedral from every possible point of sight; and in constructing in the air a vast quantity of Castles, Houses of Parliament, and other Public Buildings. Perhaps in no place in the world were so many gorgeous edifices of this class erected as under Mr. Pecksniff's auspices; and if but one twentieth part of the churches which were built in that front room, with one or other of the Miss Pecksniffs at the altar in the act of marrying the architect, could only be made available by the parliamentary commissioners, no more churches would be wanted for at least five centuries.

"Even the worldly goods of which we have just disposed," said Mr. Pecksniff, glancing round the table when he had finished; "even cream, sugar, tea, toast, ham, —"

"And eggs," suggested Charity in a low voice.

"— and eggs," said Mr. Pecksniff — "even they have their moral. See how they come and go! Every pleasure is transitory. We can't even eat, long. If we indulge in harmless fluids, we get the dropsy; if in exciting liquids, we get drunk. What a soothing reflection is that!"

"Don't say *we* get drunk, Pa," urged the eldest Miss Pecksniff.

"When I say we, my dear," returned her father, "I mean mankind in general; the human race, considered as a body, and not as individuals. There is nothing personal in morality, my love. Even such a thing as this," said Mr. Pecksniff, laying the forefinger of his left hand upon the brown paper patch on the top of his head, "slight casual baldness though it be, reminds us that we are but" — he was going to say

[redacted]



"worms," but, recollecting that worms were not remark[illegible] heads of hair, he substituted "flesh and blood."

"Which," cried Mr. Peck-niff after a pause, during [illegible] he seemed to have been casting about for a new moral, [illegible] quite successfully, "which is also very soothing. Mercy, [illegible] dear, stir the fire and throw up the cinders."

The young lady obeyed, and, having done so, resumed her stool, reposed one arm upon her father's knee, and [illegible] blooming cheek upon it. Miss Charity drew her chair [illegible] the fire, as one prepared for conversation, and looked towards her father.

"Yes," said Mr. Peck-niff, after a short pause, during which he had been silently [illegible], and shaking his head at [illegible] — "I have again been fortunate in the attainment of my [illegible] A new inmate will very shortly come among us."

"A youth, Papa?" asked Charity.

"Yes, [illegible]," said Mr. Peck-niff. "He will avail himself of [illegible] opportunity which [illegible]

[illegible]

"[illegible] Mr. Peck-niff [illegible]

[illegible] Mr. Peck-niff [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] Mr. Peck-niff [illegible]

[illegible]

"[illegible] Mr. [illegible]

[illegible]

"[illegible] Mr. [illegible]

[illegible]

her [illegible]

a mercenary girl you are! oh you naughty, thoughtful, prudent thing!"

It was perfectly charming, and worthy of the Pastoral age, to see how the two Miss Pecksniffs slapped each other after this, and then subsided into an embrace expressive of their different dispositions.

"He is well-looking," said Mr. Pecksniff, slowly and distinctly; "well-looking enough. I do not positively expect any immediate premium with him."

Notwithstanding their different natures, both Charity and Mercy concurred in opening their eyes uncommonly wide at this announcement, and in looking for the moment as blank as if their thoughts had actually had a direct bearing on the main chance.

"But what of that!" said Mr. Pecksniff, still smiling at the fire. "There is disinterestedness in the world, I hope! We are not all arrayed in two opposite ranks, — the *of*fensive and the *de*fensive. Some few there are who walk between; who help the needy as they go; and take no part with either side! Umph!"

There was something in these morsels of philanthropy which reassured the sisters. They exchanged glances, and brightened very much.

"Oh! let us not be for ever calculating, devising, and plotting for the future," said Mr. Pecksniff, smiling more and more, and looking at the fire as a man might, who was cracking a joke with it; "I am weary of such arts. If our inclinations are but good and open-hearted, let us gratify them boldly, though they bring upon us Loss instead of Profit. Eh, Charity?"

Glancing towards his daughters for the first time since he had begun these reflections, and seeing that they both smiled, Mr. Pecksniff eyed them for an instant so jocosely (though still with a kind of saintly waggishness) that the younger one was moved to sit upon his knee forthwith, put her fair arms round his neck, and kiss him twenty times. During the whole of this affectionate display she laughed to a most immoderate extent, in which hilarious indulgence even the prudent Cherry joined.

"Tut, tut," said Mr. Pecksniff, pushing his latest-born away, and running his fingers through his hair, as he resumed

his tranquil face. "What folly is this! Let us take heed how we laugh without reason, lest we cry with it. What is the domestic news since yesterday? John Westlock is gone, I hope?"

"Indeed, no," said Charity.

"And why not?" returned her father. "His term expired yesterday. And his box was packed, I know, for I saw it, in the morning, standing in the hall."

"He slept last night at the Dragon," returned the young lady, "and had Mr. Pinch to dine with him. They spent the evening together, and Mr. Pinch was not home till very late."

"And when I saw him on the stairs this morning, Pa," said Mercy with her usual sprightliness, "he looked, oh goodness, *such* a monster! with his face all manner of colours, and his eyes as dull as if they had been boiled, and his head aching dreadfully, I am sure from the look of it, and his clothes smelling, oh [illegible]

young lady [illegible]

"Now I [illegible]," said Mr. Pecksniff [illegible]

gentleman [illegible]

injury with [illegible] placed [illegible] I think Mr. P[illegible]

done better [illegible]

[illegible]

wounded my feelings [illegible]

in Mr. Pinch. [illegible] Mr.

Pinch. [illegible]

[illegible] Mr. P[illegible]

"But [illegible] Mr. P[illegible]

Charity, [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

"Ay, ay," [illegible]

is very well [illegible] Mr. P[illegible]

Mr. Pinch [illegible] Mr. P[illegible]

in the [illegible]

it is [illegible] Mr. P[illegible]

these [illegible]

person [illegible] Mr.

Pecksniff [illegible] "No [illegible]

can be expected from Mr. Pinch [illegible]

can be expected from any man alive (even the most degraded, which Mr. Pinch is not, no, really); but Mr. Pinch has disappointed me; he has hurt me; I think a little the worse of him on this account, but not of human nature. Oh, no, no!"

"Hark!" said Miss Charity, holding up her finger, as a gentle rap was heard at the street-door. "There is the creature! Now mark my words, he has come back with John Westlock for his box, and is going to help him to take it to the mail. Only mark my words, if that is n't his intention!"

Even as she spoke, the box appeared to be in progress of conveyance from the house, but, after a brief murmuring of question and answer, it was put down again, and somebody knocked at the parlour door.

"Come in!" cried Mr. Pecksniff — not severely; only virtuously. "Come in!"

An ungainly, awkward-looking man, extremely short-sighted, and prematurely bald, availed himself of this permission; and seeing that Mr. Pecksniff sat with his back towards him, gazing at the fire, stood hesitating, with the door in his hand. He was far from handsome certainly; and was dressed in a snuff-coloured suit, of an uncouth make at the best, which, being shrunken with long wear, was twisted and tortured into all kinds of odd shapes; but notwithstanding his attire, and his clumsy figure, which a great stoop in his shoulders, and a ludicrous habit he had of thrusting his head forward, by no means redeemed, one would not have been disposed (unless Mr. Pecksniff said so) to consider him a bad fellow by any means. He was, perhaps, about thirty, but he might have been almost any age between sixteen and sixty; being one of those strange creatures who never decline into an ancient appearance, but look their oldest when they are very young, and get it over at once.

Keeping his hand upon the lock of the door, he glanced from Mr. Pecksniff to Mercy, from Mercy to Charity, and from Charity to Mr. Pecksniff again, several times; but the young ladies being as intent upon the fire as their father was, and neither of the three taking any notice of him, he was fain to say, at last, —

"Oh! I beg your pardon, Mr. Pecksniff — I beg your pardon for intruding, but — "

"No intrusion, Mr. Pinch," said that gentleman very

sweetly, but without looking round. "Pray be seated, Mr. Pinch. Have the goodness to shut the door, Mr. Pinch, if you please."

"Certainly, sir," said Pinch; not doing so, however, but holding it rather wider open than before, and beckoning nervously to somebody without; "Mr. Westlock, sir, hearing that you were come home —"

"Mr. Pinch, Mr. Pinch!" said Pecksniff, wheeling his chair about, and looking at him with an aspect of the deepest melancholy, "I did not expect this from you. I have not deserved this from you!"

"No, but, upon my word, sir —" urged Pinch.

"The less you say, Mr. Pinch," interposed the other, "the better. I utter no complaint. Make no defence."

"No, but do have the goodness, sir," cried Pinch, with great earnestness, "if you please. Mr. Westlock, sir, going away for good and all, wishes to leave none but friends behind him. Mr. Westlock and you, sir, had a little difference the other day; you have had many little differences."

"Little differences!" cried Charity.

"Little differences!" echoed Mercy.

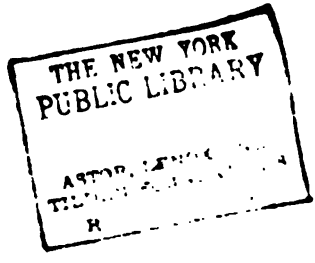
"My loves!" said Mr. Pecksniff, with the same serene upraising of his hand; "my dears!" After a solemn pause he meekly bowed to Mr. Pinch, as who should say, "Proceed;" but Mr. Pinch was so very much at a loss how to resume, and looked so helplessly at the two Miss Pecksniffs, that the conversation would most probably have terminated there, if a good-looking youth, newly arrived at man's estate, had not stepped forward from the doorway and taken up the thread of the discourse.

"Come, Mr. Pecksniff," he said, with a smile, "don't let there be any ill-blood between us, pray. I am sorry we have ever differed, and extremely sorry I have ever given you offence. Bear me no ill-will at parting, sir."

"I bear," answered Mr. Pecksniff mildly, "no ill-will to any man on earth."

"I told you he didn't," said Pinch in an undertone; "I knew he didn't! He always says he don't."

"Then you will shake hands, sir?" cried Westlock, advancing a step or two, and bespeaking Mr. Pinch's close attention by a glance.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"Umph!" said Mr. Pecksniff, in his most winning tone.

"You will shake hands, sir?"

"No, John," said Mr. Pecksniff, with a calmness quite ethereal; "no, I will not shake hands, John. I have forgiven you. I had already forgiven you, even before you ceased to reproach and taunt me. I have embraced you in the spirit, John, which is better than shaking hands."

"Pinch," said the youth, turning towards him, with a hearty disgust of his late master, "what did I tell you?"

Poor Pinch looked down uneasily at Mr. Pecksniff, whose eye was fixed upon him as it had been from the first; and looking up at the ceiling again, made no reply.

"As to your forgiveness, Mr. Pecksniff," said the youth, "I 'll not have it upon such terms. I won't be forgiven."

"Won't you, John?" retorted Mr. Pecksniff, with a smile. "You must. You can't help it. Forgiveness is a high quality; an exalted virtue; far above *your* control or influence, John. I *will* forgive you. You cannot move me to remember any wrong you have ever done me, John."

"Wrong!" cried the other, with all the heat and impetuosity of his age. "Here 's a pretty fellow! Wrong! Wrong I have done him! He 'll not even remember the five hundred pounds he had with me under false pretences; or the seventy pounds a year for board and lodging that would have been dear at seventeen! Here 's a martyr!"

"Money, John," said Mr. Pecksniff, "is the root of all evil. I grieve to see that it is already bearing evil fruit in you. But I will not remember its existence. I will not even remember the conduct of that misguided person" — and here, although he spoke like one at peace with all the world, he used an emphasis that plainly said "I have my eye upon the rascal now" — "that misguided person who has brought you here to-night, seeking to disturb (it is a happiness to say, in vain) the heart's repose and peace of one who would have shed his dearest blood to serve him."

The voice of Mr. Pecksniff trembled as he spoke, and sobs were heard from his daughters. Sounds floated on the air, moreover, as if two spirit voices had exclaimed — one, "Beast!" the other, "Savage!"

"Forgiveness," said Mr. Pecksniff, "entire and pure forgiveness is not incompatible with a wounded heart; perchance when

the heart *is* wounded, it becomes a greater virtue. With my breast still wrung and grieved to its inmost core by the ingratitude of that person, I am proud and glad to say that I forgive him. Nay! I beg," cried Mr. Pecksniff, raising his voice, as Pinch appeared about to speak — "I beg that individual not to offer a remark; he will truly oblige me by not uttering one word, just now. I am not sure that I am equal to the trial. In a very short space of time, I shall have sufficient fortitude, I trust, to converse with him as if these events had never happened. But not," said Mr. Pecksniff, turning round again towards the fire, and waving his hand in the direction of the door — "not now."

"Bah!" cried John Westlock, with the utmost disgust and disdain the monosyllable is capable of expressing. "Ladies, good evening. Come, Pinch, it 's not worth thinking of. I was right and you were wrong. That 's a small matter; you 'll be wiser another time."

So saying, he clapped that dejected companion on the shoulder, turned upon his heel, and walked out into the passage, whither poor Mr. Pinch, after lingering irresolutely in the parlour for a few seconds, expressing in his countenance the deepest mental misery and gloom, followed him. Then they took up the box between them, and sallied out to meet the mail.

That fleet conveyance passed, every night, the corner of a lane at some distance; towards which point they bent their steps. For some minutes they walked along in silence, until at length young Westlock burst into a loud laugh, and at intervals into another, and another. Still there was no response from his companion.

"I 'll tell you what, Pinch!" he said abruptly, after another lengthened silence — "you have n't half enough of the devil in you. Half enough! You have n't any."

"Well!" said Pinch with a sigh, "I don't know, I 'm sure. It 's a compliment to say so. If I have n't, I suppose I 'm all the better for it."

"All the better!" repeated his companion tartly; "all the worse, you mean to say."

"And yet," said Pinch, pursuing his own thoughts and not this last remark on the part of his friend, "I must have a good deal of what you call the devil in me, too, or how could I

make Pecksniff so uncomfortable? I would n't have occasioned him so much distress — don't laugh, please — for a mine of money; and Heaven knows I could find good use for it, too, John. How grieved he was!"

"*He* grieved!" returned the other.

"Why did n't you observe that the tears were almost starting out of his eyes!" cried Pinch. "Bless my soul, John, is it nothing to see a man moved to that extent and know one's self to be the cause! And did you hear him say that he could have shed his blood for me?"

"Do you *want* any blood shed for you?" returned his friend, with considerable irritation. "Does he shed anything for you that you *do* want? Does he shed employment for you, instruction for you, pocket-money for you? Does he shed even legs of mutton for you in any decent proportion to potatoes and garden stuff?"

"I am afraid," said Pinch, sighing again, "that I 'm a great eater; I can't disguise from myself that I 'm a great eater. Now you know that, John."

"*You* a great eater!" retorted his companion, with no less indignation than before. "How do you know you are?"

There appeared to be forcible matter in this inquiry, for Mr. Pinch only repeated in an undertone that he had a strong misgiving on the subject, and that he greatly feared he was.

"Besides, whether I am or no," he added, "that has little or nothing to do with his thinking me ungrateful. John, there is scarcely a sin in the world that is in my eyes such a crying one as ingratitude; and when he taxes me with that, and believes me to be guilty of it, he makes me miserable and wretched."

"Do you think he don't know that?" returned the other scornfully. "But come, Pinch, before I say anything more to you, just run over the reasons you have for being grateful to him at all, will you? Change hands first, for the box is heavy. That 'll do. Now, go on."

"In the first place," said Pinch, "he took me as his pupil for much less than he asked."

"Well," rejoined his friend, perfectly unmoved by this instance of generosity. "What in the second place?"

"What in the second place!" cried Pinch, in a sort of desperation; "why everything in the second place. My poor

[redacted]



old grandmother died happy to think that she had put me with such an excellent man. I have grown up in his house, I am in his confidence, I am his assistant, he allows me a salary: when his business improves, my prospects are to improve, too. All this, and a great deal more, is in the second place. And in the very prologue and preface to the first place, John, you must consider this, which nobody knows better than I: that I was born for much plainer and poorer things, that I am not a good hand at his kind of business, and have no talent for it, or, indeed, for anything else but odds and ends that are of no use or service to anybody."

He said this with so much earnestness, and in a tone so full of feeling, that his companion instinctively changed his manner as he sat down on the box (they had by this time reached the finger-post at the end of the lane), motioned him to sit down beside him, and laid his hand upon his shoulder.

"I believe you are one of the best fellows in the world," he said, "Tom Pinch."

"Not at all," rejoined Tom. "If you only knew Pecksniff as well as I do, you might say it of him, indeed, and say it truly."

"I'll say anything of him you like," returned the other, "and not another word to his disparagement."

"It's for my sake, then; not his, I am afraid," said Pinch, shaking his head gravely.

"For whose you please, Tom, so that it does please you. Oh! He's a famous fellow! *He* never scraped and clawed into his pocket all your grandmother's hard savings—she was a housekeeper, wasn't she, Tom?"

"Yes," said Mr Pinch, [illegible] nodding his head: "a gentleman's housekeeper."

"*He* never [illegible] *He* [illegible] No, Tom [illegible]

"No [illegible] I [illegible] were [illegible]

"So I [illegible] *He* didn't take [illegible] he had asked [illegible]

all she had, and more than he expected: not he, Tom! He doesn't keep you as his assistant because you are of any use to him; because your wonderful faith in his pretensions is of inestimable service in all his mean disputes; because your honesty reflects honesty on him; because your wandering about this little place all your spare hours, reading in ancient books, and foreign tongues, gets noised abroad even as far as Salisbury — making of him, Pecksniff the master, a man of learning and of vast importance. *He* gets no credit from you, Tom, not he."

"Why, of course he don't," said Pinch, gazing at his friend with a more troubled aspect than before. "Pecksniff get credit from *me!* Well!"

"Don't I say that it's ridiculous," rejoined the other, "even to think of such a thing?"

"Why, it's madness," said Tom.

"Madness!" returned young Westlock. "Certainly it's madness. Who but a madman would suppose he cares to hear it said on Sundays that the volunteer who plays the organ in the church, and practises on summer evenings in the dark, is Mr. Pecksniff's young man, eh, Tom? Who but a madman would suppose it is the game of such a man as he to have his name in everybody's mouth, connected with the thousand useless odds and ends you do (and which, of course, he taught you), eh, Tom? Who but a madman would suppose you advertise him hereabouts, much cheaper and much better than a chalker on the walls could, eh, Tom? As well might one suppose that he doesn't on all occasions pour out his whole heart and soul to you; that he doesn't make you a very liberal and indeed rather an extravagant allowance; or, to be more wild and monstrous still, if that be possible, as well might one suppose," and here, at every word, he struck him lightly on the breast, "that Pecksniff traded in your nature, and that your nature was to be timid and distrustful of yourself, and trustful of all other men, but most of all of him who least deserves it. There would be madness, Tom!"

Mr. Pinch had listened to all this with looks of bewilderment, which seemed to be in part occasioned by the matter of his companion's speech, and in part by his rapid and vehement manner. Now that he had come to a close, he drew a very long breath; and gazing wistfully in his face as if he were

unable to settle in his own mind what expression it wore, and were desirous to draw from it as good a clue to his real meaning as it was possible to obtain in the dark, was about to answer, when the sound of the mail guard's horn came cheerily upon their ears, putting an immediate end to the conference greatly as it seemed to the satisfaction of the younger man who jumped up briskly, and gave his hand to his companion.

"Both hands, Tom. I shall write to you from London, mind!"

"Yes," said Pinch. "Yes — do, please. Good-by. Good-by. I can hardly believe you're going. It seems now but yesterday that you came. Good-by! my dear old fellow!"

John Westlock returned his parting words with no less heartiness of manner, and sprung up to his seat upon the roof. Off went the mail at a canter down the dark road; the lamps gleaming brightly, and the horn awakening all the echoes far and wide.

"Go your ways," said Pinch, apostrophising the coach. "I can hardly persuade myself but you're alive, and are some great monster who visits this place at certain intervals, to bear my friends away into the world. You're more exulting and rampant than usual to-night, I think; and you may well crow over your prize, for he is a fine lad, an ingenuous lad, and has but one fault that I know of: he don't mean it, but he is most cruelly unjust to Pecksniff!"

## CHAPTER III

IN WHICH CERTAIN OTHER PERSONS ARE INTRODUCED; ON THE SAME TERMS AS IN THE LAST CHAPTER.

MENTION has been already made more than once of a certain Dragon who swung and creaked complainingly before the village ale-house door. A faded and an ancient dragon he was; and many a wintry storm of rain, snow, sleet, and hail had changed his colour from a gaudy blue to a faint lack-lustre shade of gray. But there he hung; rearing in a state of monstrous imbecility on his hind legs; waxing, with every month that passed, so much more dim and shapeless, that as you gazed at him on one side of the sign-board it seemed as if he must be gradually melting through it, and coming out upon the other.

He was a courteous and considerate dragon too, or had been in his distincter days; for in the midst of his rampant feebleness, he kept one of his fore-paws near his nose, as though he would say, "Don't mind me — it 's only my fun;" while he held out the other in polite and hospitable entreaty. Indeed it must be conceded to the whole brood of dragons of modern times that they have made a great advance in civilisation and refinement. They no longer demand a beautiful virgin for breakfast every morning, with as much regularity as any tame single gentleman expects his hot roll, but rest content with the society of idle bachelors and roving married men; and they are now remarkable rather for holding aloof from the softer sex and discouraging their visits (especially on Saturday nights), than for rudely insisting on their company without any reference to their inclinations, as they are known to have done in days of yore.

Nor is this tribute to the reclaimed animals in question so wide a digression into the realms of Natural History as it may, at first sight, appear to be; for the present business of these pages is with the dragon who had his retreat in Mr.

Pecksniff's neighbourhood, and that courteous animal being already on the carpet, there is nothing in the way of [illegible] diate transaction.

For many years, then, he had swung and creaked [illegible] flapped himself about before the two windows of the [illegible] room in that house of entertainment to which he lent his [illegible] but never in all his swinging, creaking, and flapping [illegible] been such a stir within its dingy precincts, as on the [illegible] next after that upon which the incidents detailed in the [illegible] chapter occurred; when there was such a hurrying up [illegible] down stairs of feet, such a glancing of lights, such a [illegible] ing of voices, such a smoking and spattering of wood [illegible] lighted in a damp chimney, such an airing of linen, [illegible] scorching smell of hot warming-pans, such a [illegible] and to-do, in short, as never dragon, griffin, unicorn, [illegible] animal of that species presided over, since they first [illegible] interest themselves in household affairs.

An old gentleman and a young lady, travelling, [illegible]

[illegible]

Drag[illegible]

H[illegible]

[illegible]

enced his resolution in the least degree. He would have no person sent for. The worse he grew, the more rigid and inflexible he became in his determination. If they sent for any person to attend him, man, woman, or child, he would leave the house directly (so he told them), though he quitted it on foot, and died upon the threshold of the door.

Now, there being no medical practitioner actually resident in the village, but a poor apothecary who was also a grocer and general dealer, the landlady had, upon her own responsibility, sent for him, in the very first burst and outset of the disaster. Of course it followed, as a necessary result of his being wanted, that he was not at home. He had gone some miles away, and was not expected home until late at night; so, the landlady being by this time pretty well beside herself, despatched the same messenger in all haste for Mr. Pecksniff, as a learned man who could bear a deal of responsibility, and a moral man who could adminster a world of comfort to a troubled mind. That her guest had need of some efficient services under the latter head was obvious enough from the restless expressions, importing, however, rather a worldly than a spiritual anxiety, to which he gave frequent utterance.

From this last-mentioned secret errand, the messenger returned with no better news than from the first; Mr. Pecksniff was not at home. However, they got the patient into bed without him; and, in the course of two hours, he gradually became so far better that there were much longer intervals than at first between his terms of suffering. By degrees he ceased to suffer at all; though his exhaustion was occasionally so great that it suggested hardly less alarm than his actual endurance had done.

It was in one of his intervals of repose, when, looking round with great caution, and reaching uneasily out of his nest of pillows, he endeavoured, with a strange air of secrecy and distrust, to make use of the writing materials which he had ordered to be placed on a table beside him, that the young lady and the mistress of the Blue Dragon found themselves sitting side by side before the fire in the sick chamber.

The mistress of the Blue Dragon was in outward appearance just what a landlady should be; broad, buxom, comfortable, and good-looking, with a face of clear red and white, which by its jovial aspect at once bore testimony to her hearty

participation in the good things of the larder and cellar, [illegible] their thriving and healthful influences. She was a w[illegible] but years ago had passed through her state of weeds, [illegible] into flower again, and in full bloom she had [illegible] since; and in full bloom she was now, with roses [illegible] skirts, and roses on her bodice, roses in her cap, [illegible] cheeks, — ay, and roses, worth the gathering too, [illegible] for that matter. She had still a bright black eye, [illegible] black hair, was [illegible]ly, dimpled, plump, and tight as a [illegible]berry, and though she was not exactly what the w[illegible] young, you may make an affidavit, on trust, before [illegible] or magistrate in Christendom, that there are a great [illegible] young ladies in the world (blessings on them, [illegible]) whom you wouldn't like half as well, or admire half as [illegible] as the beaming hostess of the Blue Dragon.

As this fair matron sat beside the fire, she glanced [illegible]ally, with all the pride of ownership, about the [illegible] [illegible]

fox upon the top of the wardrobe was devoid of any spark of vigilance, for his glass eye had fallen out, and he slumbered as he stood.

The wandering attention of the mistress of the Blue Dragon roved to these things but twice or thrice, and then for but an instant at a time. It soon deserted them, and even the distant bed with its strange burden, for the young creature immediately before her, who, with her downcast eyes intently fixed upon the fire, sat wrapped in silent meditation.

She was very young, apparently not more than seventeen; timid and shrinking in her manner, and yet with a greater share of self-possession and control over her emotions than usually belongs to a far more advanced period of female life. This she had abundantly shown, but now, in her tending of the sick gentleman. She was short in stature, and her figure was slight, as became her years; but all the charms of youth and maidenhood set it off, and clustered on her gentle brow. Her face was very pale, in part no doubt from recent agitation. Her dark brown hair, disordered from the same cause, had fallen negligently from its bonds, and hung upon her neck: for which instance of its waywardness, no male observer would have had the heart to blame it.

Her attire was that of a lady, but extremely plain; and in her manner, even when she sat as still as she did then, there was an indefinable something which appeared to be in kindred with her scrupulously unpretending dress. She had sat at first looking anxiously towards the bed; but seeing that the patient remained quiet, and was busy with his writing, she had softly moved her chair into its present place — partly, as it seemed, from an instinctive consciousness that he desired to avoid observation; and partly that she might, unseen by him, give some vent to the natural feelings she had hitherto suppressed.

Of all this, and much more, the rosy landlady of the Blue Dragon took as accurate note and observation as only woman can take of woman. And at length she said, in a voice too low, she knew, to reach the bed: —

"You have seen the gentleman in this way before, miss? Is he used to these attacks?"

"I have seen him very ill before, but not so ill as he has been to-night."

"What a Providence!" said the landlady of the Dragon,

"that you had the prescriptions and the medicines with you, miss!"

"They are intended for such an emergency. We never travel without them."

"Oh!" thought the hostess, "then we are in the habit of travelling, and of travelling together."

She was so conscious of expressing this in her face, that meeting the young lady's eyes immediately afterwards, and being a very honest hostess, she was rather confused.

"The gentleman — your grandpapa" — she resumed, after a short pause, "being so bent on having no assistance, must terrify you very much, miss!"

"I have been very much alarmed to-night. He — he is not my grandfather."

"Father, I should have said," returned the hostess, sensible of having made an awkward mistake.

"Nor my father," said the young lady. "Nor," she added, slightly smiling with a quick perception of what the landlady was going to add, "nor my uncle. We are not related."

"Oh dear me!" returned the landlady, still more embarrassed than before: "how could I be so very much mistaken, knowing, as anybody in their proper senses might, that when a gentleman is ill, he looks so much older than he really is! That I should have called you, 'Miss,' too, Ma'am!" But when she had proceeded thus far, she glanced involuntarily at the third finger of the young lady's left hand, and faltered again: for there was no ring upon it.

"When I told you we were not related," said the other mildly, but not without confusion on her own part, "I meant not in any way. Not even by marriage. Did you call me, Martin!"

"Call you!" cried the old man, looking quickly up, and hurriedly drawing beneath the coverlet the paper on which he had been writing. "No."

She had moved a pace or two towards the bed, but stopped immediately, and went no farther.

"No," he repeated, with a petulant emphasis. "Why do you ask me? If I had called you, what need for such a question?"

"It was the creaking of the sign outside, sir, I dare say," observed the landlady, a suggestion by the way (as she felt a

moment after she had made it), not at all complimentary to the voice of the old gentleman.

"No matter what, ma'am," he rejoined; "it was n't I. Why, how you stand there, Mary, as if I had the plague! But they 're all afraid of me," he added, leaning helplessly backward on his pillow, "even she! There is a curse upon me. What else have I to look for!"

"Oh dear, no. Oh no, I 'm sure," said the good-tempered landlady, rising, and going towards him. "Be of better cheer, sir. These are only sick fancies."

"What are only sick fancies?" he retorted. "What do you know about fancies? Who told *you* about fancies? The old story! Fancies!"

"Only see again there, how you take one up!" said the mistress of the Blue Dragon, with unimpaired good humour. "Dear heart alive, there is no harm in the word, sir, if it is an old one. Folks in good health have their fancies too, and strange ones, every day."

Harmless as this speech appeared to be, it acted on the traveller's distrust like oil on fire. He raised his head up in the bed, and, fixing on her two dark eyes whose brightness was exaggerated by the paleness of his hollow cheeks, as they in turn, together with his straggling locks of long gray hair, were rendered whiter by the tight black velvet skull-cap which he wore, he searched her face intently.

"Ah! you begin too soon," he said, in so low a voice that he seemed to be thinking it, rather than addressing her. "But you lose no time. You do your errand, and you earn your fee. Now, who may be *your* client?"

The landlady looked in great astonishment at her whom he called Mary, and finding no rejoinder in the drooping face, looked back again at him. At first she had recoiled involuntarily, supposing him disordered in his mind; but the slow composure of his manner, and the settled purpose announced in his strong features, and gathering, most of all, about his puckered mouth, forbade the supposition.

"Come," he said, "tell me who is it? Being here, it is not very hard for me to guess, you may suppose."

"Martin," interposed the young lady, laying her hand upon his arm; "reflect how short a time we have been in this house, and that even your name is unknown here."

"Unless," he said, "you —" He was evidently tempted to express a suspicion of her having broken his confidence in favour of the landlady, but either remembering her tender nursing, or being moved in some sort, by her face, he checked himself, and changing his uneasy posture in the bed, was silent.

"There!" said Mrs. Lupin, for in that name the Blue Dragon was licensed to furnish entertainment, both to man and beast. "Now you will be well again, sir. You forgot, for the moment, that there were none but friends here."

"Oh!" cried the old man moaning impatiently, as he tossed one restless arm upon the coverlet, "why do you talk to me of friends! Can you or anybody teach me to know who are my friends, and who my enemies?"

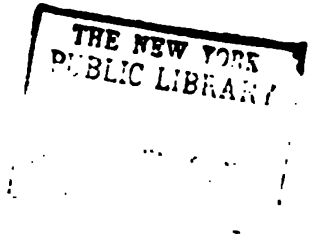
"At least," urged Mrs. Lupin gently, "this young lady is your friend, I 'm sure."

"She has no temptation to be otherwise," cried the old man, like one whose hope and confidence were utterly exhausted. "I suppose she is — Heaven knows. There; let me try to sleep. Leave the candle where it is."

As they retired from the bed, he drew forth the writing which had occupied him so long, and holding it in the flame of the taper burnt it to ashes. That done, he extinguished the light, and turning his face away with a heavy sigh, drew the coverlet about his head and lay quite still.

This destruction of the paper, both as being strangely inconsistent with the labour he had devoted to it, and as involving considerable danger of fire to the Dragon, occasioned Mrs. Lupin not a little consternation. But the young lady evincing no surprise, curiosity, or alarm, whispered her, with many thanks for her solicitude and company, that she would remain there some time longer, and that she begged her not to share her watch, as she was well used to being alone, and would pass the time in reading.

Mrs. Lupin had her full share and dividend of that large amount of curiosity which is inherited by her sex, and at another time it might have been difficult so to impress this hint upon her as to induce her to take it. But now, in sheer wonder and amazement at these mysteries, she withdrew at once, and repairing straightway to her own little parlour below stairs, sat down in her easy-chair with unnatural composure. At this very crisis, a step was heard in the entry,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and Mr. Pecksniff, looking sweetly over the half-door of the bar and into the vista of snug privacy beyond, murmured: —

"Good evening, Mrs. Lupin!"

"Oh dear me, sir!" she cried, advancing to receive him, "I am so very glad you have come."

"And *I* am very glad I have come," said Mr. Pecksniff, "if I can be of service. I am very glad I have come. What is the matter, Mrs. Lupin?"

"A gentleman taken ill upon the road, has been so very bad up stairs, sir," said the tearful hostess.

"A gentleman taken ill upon the road, has been so very bad up stairs, has he?" repeated Mr. Pecksniff. "Well, well!"

Now there was nothing that one may call decidedly original in this remark, nor can it be exactly said to have contained any wise precept theretofore unknown to mankind, or to have opened any hidden source of consolation: but Mr. Pecksniff's manner was so bland, and he nodded his head so soothingly, and showed in everything such an affable sense of his own excellence, that anybody would have been, as Mrs. Lupin was, comforted by the mere voice and presence of such a man; and though he had merely said "a verb must agree with its nominative case in number and person, my good friend," or "eight times eight are sixty-four, my worthy soul," must have felt deeply grateful to him for his humanity and wisdom.

"And how," asked Mr. Pecksniff, drawing off his gloves and warming his hands before the fire, as benevolently as if they were somebody else's, not his; "and how is he now?"

"He is better, and quite tranquil," answered Mrs. Lupin.

"He is better, and quite tranquil," said Mr. Pecksniff. "Very well! ve-ry well!"

Here again, though the statement was Mrs. Lupin's and not Mr. Pecksniff's, Mr. Pecksniff made it his own and consoled her with it. It was not much when Mrs. Lupin said it, but it was a whole book when Mr. Pecksniff said it. "*I* observe," he seemed to say, "and, through me, morality in general remarks, that he is better and quite tranquil."

"There must be weighty matters on his mind though," said the hostess, shaking her head, "for he talks, sir, in the strangest way you ever heard. He is far from easy in his thoughts, and wants some proper advice from those whose goodness makes it worth his having."

"Then," said Mr. Pecksniff, "he is the sort of customer for me." But though he said this in the plainest language, he did n't speak a word. He only shook his head, disparagingly of himself too.

"I am afraid, sir," continued the landlady, first looking round to assure herself that there was nobody within hearing, and then looking down upon the floor. "I am very much afraid, sir, that his conscience is troubled by his not being related — or — or even married to — a very young lady — "

"Mrs. Lupin!" said Mr. Pecksniff, holding up his hand with something in his manner as nearly approaching to severity as any expression of his, mild being that he was, could ever do. "Person! young person!"

"A very young person," said Mrs. Lupin, courtesying and blushing — "I beg your pardon, sir, but I have been so hurried to-night, that I don't know what I say — who is with him now."

"Who is with him now," ruminated Mr. Pecksniff, warming his back (as he had warmed his hands) as if it were a widow's back, or an orphan's back, or an enemy's back, or a back that any less excellent man would have suffered to be cold. "Oh dear me, dear me!"

"At the same time I am bound to say, and I do say with all my heart," observed the hostess earnestly, "that her looks and manner almost disarm suspicion."

"Your suspicion, Mrs. Lupin," said Mr. Pecksniff gravely, "is very natural."

Touching which remark, let it be written down to their confusion that the enemies of this worthy man unblushingly maintained that he always said of what was very bad, that it was very natural, and that he unconsciously betrayed his own nature in doing so.

"Your suspicion, Mrs. Lupin," he repeated, "is very natural, and I have no doubt correct. I will wait upon these travellers."

With that he took off his great-coat, and having run his fingers through his hair, thrust one hand gently in the bosom of his waistcoat and meekly signed to her to lead the way.

"Shall I knock?" asked Mrs. Lupin, when they reached the chamber door.

"No," said Mr. Pecksniff, "enter, if you please."

They went in on tiptoe, or rather the hostess took that precaution, for Mr. Pecksniff always walked softly. The old gentleman was still asleep, and his young companion still sat reading by the fire.

"I am afraid," said Mr. Pecksniff, pausing at the door, and giving his head a melancholy roll, "I am afraid that this looks artful. I am afraid, Mrs. Lupin, do you know, that this looks very artful!"

As he finished this whisper, he advanced, before the hostess; and at the same time the young lady, hearing footsteps, rose. Mr. Pecksniff glanced at the volume she held, and whispered Mrs. Lupin again: if possible, with increased despondency.

"Yes, ma'am," he said, "it is a good book. I was fearful of that beforehand. I am apprehensive that this is a very deep thing indeed!"

"What gentleman is this?" inquired the object of his virtuous doubts.

"Hush! don't trouble yourself, ma'am," said Mr. Pecksniff, as the landlady was about to answer. "This young" — in spite of himself he hesitated when "person" rose to his lips, and substituted another word — "this young stranger, Mrs. Lupin, will excuse me for replying briefly, that I reside in this village; it may be in an influential manner, however undeserved; and that I have been summoned here by you. I am here, as I am everywhere, I hope, in sympathy for the sick and sorry."

With these impressive words, Mr. Pecksniff passed over to the bedside, where, after patting the counterpane once or twice in a very solemn manner, as if by that means he gained a clear insight into the patient's disorder, he took his seat in a large arm-chair, and in an attitude of some thoughtfulness and much comfort, waited for his waking. Whatever objection the young lady urged to Mrs. Lupin went no further, for nothing more was said to Mr. Pecksniff, and Mr. Pecksniff said nothing more to anybody else.

Full half an hour elapsed before the old man stirred, but at length he turned himself in bed, and, though not yet awake, gave tokens that his sleep was drawing to an end. By little and little he removed the bed-clothes from about his head, and turned still more towards the side where Mr. Pecksniff sat. In course of time his eyes opened; and he lay for a few moments

as people newly roused sometimes will, gazing indolently at h visitor, without any distinct consciousness of his presence.

There was nothing remarkable in these proceedings, exce the influence they worked on Mr. Pecksniff, which cou hardly have been surpassed by the most marvellous of natur phenomena. Gradually his hands became tightly clasped up the elbows of the chair, his eyes dilated with surprise, h mouth opened, his hair stood more erect upon his forehe than its custom was, until, at length, when the old man re in bed and stared at him with scarcely less emotion than h showed himself, the Pecksniff doubts were all resolved, and h exclaimed aloud: —

"You *are* Martin Chuzzlewit!"

His consternation of surprise was so genuine, that the o man, with all the disposition that he clearly entertained t believe it assumed, was convinced of its reality.

"I *am* Martin Chuzzlewit," he said bitterly: "and Mart Chuzzlewit wishes you had been hanged, before you had co here to disturb him in his sleep. Why, I dreamed of th fellow!" he said, lying down again and turning away his fac "before I knew that he was near me!"

"My good cousin —" said Mr. Pecksniff.

"There! His very first words!" cried the old man, sha ing his gray head to and fro upon the pillow, and throwi up his hands. "In his very first words he asserts his relatio ship! I knew he would; they all do it! Near or distan blood or water, it 's all one. Ugh! What a calendar deceit, and lying, and false-witnessing, the sound of any wo of kindred opens before me!"

"Pray do not be hasty, Mr. Chuzzlewit," said Pecksniff, a tone that was at once in the sublimest degree compassiona and dispassionate, for he had by this time recovered from h surprise, and was in full possession of his virtuous self. "Y will regret being hasty, I know you will."

"*You* know!" said Martin contemptuously.

"Yes," retorted Mr. Pecksniff. "Ay, ay, Mr. Chuzzlewi and don't imagine that I mean to court or flatter you, f nothing is further from my intention. Neither, sir, need y entertain the least misgiving that I shall repeat that obnoxio word which has given you so much offence already. Wh should I? What do I expect or want from you? There

nothing in your possession that *I* know of, Mr. Chuzzlewit, which is much to be coveted for the happiness it brings you."

"That 's true enough," muttered the old man.

"Apart from that consideration," said Mr. Pecksniff, watchful of the effect he made, "it must be plain to you (I am sure) by this time, that if I had wished to insinuate myself into your good opinion, I should have been, of all things, careful not to address you as a relative — knowing your humour, and being quite certain beforehand that I could not have had a worse letter of recommendation."

Martin made not any verbal answer; but he as clearly implied, though only by a motion of his legs beneath the bedclothes, that there was reason in this, and that he could not dispute it, as if he had said as much in good set terms.

"No," said Mr. Pecksniff, keeping his hand in his waistcoat as though he were ready, on the shortest notice, to produce his heart for Martin Chuzzlewit's inspection, "I came here to offer my services to a stranger. I make no offer of them to you, because I know you would distrust me if I did. But lying on that bed, sir, I regard you as a stranger, and I have just that amount of interest in you, which I hope I should feel in any stranger, circumstanced as you are. Beyond that, I am quite as indifferent to you, Mr. Chuzzlewit, as you are to me."

Having said which, Mr. Pecksniff threw himself back in the easy-chair: so radiant with ingenuous honesty, that Mrs. Lupin almost wondered not to see a stained-glass glory, such as the saint wore in the church, shining about his head.

A long pause succeeded. The old man, with increased restlessness, changed his posture several times. Mrs. Lupin and the young lady gazed in silence at the counterpane. Mr. Pecksniff toyed abstractedly with his eye-glass, and kept his eyes shut, that he might ruminate the better.

"Eh?" he said at last, opening them suddenly, and looking towards the bed. "I beg your pardon. I thought you spoke. Mrs. Lupin," he continued, slowly rising, "I am not aware that I can be of any service to you here. The gentleman is better, and you are as good a nurse as he can have. Eh?"

This last note of interrogation bore reference to another change of posture on the old man's part, which brought his face towards Mr. Pecksniff for the first time since he had turned away from him.

[redacted]



"If you desire to speak to me before I go, sir," continued that gentleman, after another pause, "you may command my leisure; but I must stipulate, in justice to myself, that you do so as to a stranger — strictly as to a stranger."

Now if Mr. Pecksniff knew, from anything Martin Chuzzlewit had expressed in gestures, that he wanted to speak to him, he could only have found it out on some such principle as prevails in melodramas, and in virtue of which the elderly farmer with the comic son always knows what the dumb girl means when she takes refuge in his garden, and relates her personal memoirs in incomprehensible pantomime. But without stopping to make any inquiry on this point, Martin Chuzzlewit signed to his young companion to withdraw, which she immediately did, along with the landlady; leaving him and Mr. Pecksniff alone together. For some time they looked at each other in silence; or rather the old man looked at Mr. Pecksniff, and Mr. Pecksniff, again closing his eyes on all outward objects, took an inward survey of his own [illegible]. That it [illegible] for his trouble, and [illegible] [illegible] [illegible], was [illegible] in the [illegible] of his face.

"[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] total stranger [illegible] the old man, [illegible]."

Mr. P[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] apparent [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] opened [illegible] that [illegible] [illegible]

"[illegible]" said Martin. "[illegible] I [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] Mr. Pecksniff [illegible]

[illegible]

"[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] order [illegible]

said the old man, "I am not lavish of it. Some people find their gratification in storing it up; and others theirs in parting with it; but I have no gratification connected with the thing. Pain and bitterness are the only goods it ever could procure for me. I hate it. It is a spectre walking before me through the world, and making every social pleasure hideous."

A thought arose in Mr. Pecksniff's mind, which must have instantly mounted to his face, or Martin Chuzzlewit would not have resumed as quickly and as sternly as he did: —

"You would advise me, for my peace of mind, to get rid of this source of misery, and transfer it to some one who could bear it better. Even you, perhaps, would rid me of a burden under which I suffer so grievously. But, kind stranger," said the old man, whose every feature darkened as he spoke, "good Christian stranger, that is a main part of my trouble. In other hands I have known money to do good; in other hands I have known it triumphed in, and boasted of with reason, as the master-key to all the brazen gates that close upon the paths to worldly honour, fortune, and enjoyment. To what man or woman, to what worthy, honest, incorruptible creature, shall I confide such a talisman, either now or when I die? Do you know any such person? *Your* virtues are of course inestimable, but can you tell me of any other living creature who will bear the test of contact with myself?"

"Of contact with yourself, sir?" echoed Mr. Pecksniff.

"Ay," returned the old man, "the test of contact with me — with me. You have heard of him whose misery (the gratification of his own foolish wish) was, that he turned everything he touched to gold. The curse of my existence, and the realisation of my own mad desire, is that by the golden standard which I bear about me, I am doomed to try the metal of all other men, and find it false and hollow."

Mr. Pecksniff shook his head, and said, "You think so."

"Oh, yes," cried the old man, "I think so! and in your telling me 'I think so,' I recognise the true unworldly ring of *your* metal. I tell you, man," he added, with increasing bitterness, "that I have gone, a rich man, among people of all grades and kinds, — relatives, friends, and strangers, — among people in whom, when I was poor, I had confidence, and justly, for they never once deceived me then, or, to me, wronged each other. But I have never found one nature, no,

[redacted]



not one, in which, being wealthy and alone, I was not forced to detect the latent corruption that lay hid within it, waiting for such as I to bring it forth. Treachery, deceit, and low design; hatred of competitors real or fancied for my favour; meanness, falsehood, baseness, and servility; or," and here he looked closely in his cousin's eyes, "or an assumption of honest independence, almost worse than all; these are the beauties which my wealth has brought to light. Brother against brother, child against parent, friends treading on the faces of friends, this is the social company by whom my way has been attended. There are stories told—they may be true or false—of rich men, who, in the garb of poverty, have found out virtue and rewarded it. They were dolts and idiots for their pains. They should have made the search in their own characters. They should have shown themselves fit objects to be robbed and preyed upon and plotted against, and [illegible]

Mr. [illegible]

[illegible]

"Upon my word, sir!" said Mr. Pecksniff, laying his hand upon his breast, and dropping his eyelids.

"I forgot," cried the old man, looking at him with a keenness which the other seemed to feel, although he did not raise his eyes so as to see it; "I ask your pardon. I forgot you were a stranger. For the moment you reminded me of one Pecksniff, a cousin of mine. As I was saying — the young girl whom you just now saw is an orphan child, whom, with one steady purpose, I have bred and educated, or, if you prefer the word, adopted. For a year or more she has been my constant companion, and she is my only one. I have taken, as she knows, a solemn oath never to leave her sixpence when I die, but while I live, I make her an annual allowance, not extravagant in its amount and yet not stinted. There is a compact between us that no term of affectionate cajolery shall ever be addressed by either to the other, but that she shall call me always by my Christian name; I her, by hers. She is bound to me in life by ties of interest, and losing by my death, and having no expectation disappointed, will mourn it, perhaps; though for that I care little. This is the only kind of friend I have or will have. Judge from such premises what a profitable hour you have spent in coming here, and leave me, to return no more."

With these words, the old man fell slowly back upon his pillow. Mr. Pecksniff as slowly rose, and, with a prefatory hem, began as follows: —

"Mr. Chuzzlewit."

"There. Go!" interposed the other. "Enough of this. I am weary of you."

"I am sorry for that, sir," rejoined Mr. Pecksniff, "because I have a duty to discharge, from which, depend upon it, I shall not shrink. No, sir, I shall not shrink."

It is a lamentable fact, that as Mr. Pecksniff stood erect beside the bed, in all the dignity of Goodness, and addressed him thus, the old man cast an angry glance towards the candlestick, as if he were possessed by a strong inclination to launch it at his cousin's head. But he constrained himself, and pointing with his finger to the door, informed him that his road lay there.

"Thank you," said Mr. Pecksniff, "I am aware of that; I am going. But before I go, I crave your leave to speak, and

[redacted]



more than that, Mr. Chuzzlewit, I must and will — yes, indeed, I repeat it, must and will — be heard. I am not surprised, sir, at anything you have told me to-night. It is natural, very natural, and the greater part of it was known to me before. I will not say," continued Mr. Pecksniff, drawing out his pocket-handkerchief, and winking with both eyes at once, as it were, against his will, "I will not say that you are mistaken in me. While you are in your present mood I would not say so for the world. I almost wish, indeed, that I had a different nature, that I might repress even this slight confession of weakness — which I cannot disguise from you, which I feel is humiliating, but which you will have the goodness to excuse. We will say, if you please," added Mr Pecksniff, with great tenderness of manner, "that it arises from a cold in the head, or is attributable to snuff, or smelling salts, or onions, or anything but the real cause."

Here he paused for an instant, and concealed his face behind his pocket-handkerchief. Then, smiling faintly, and holding the bed-furniture with one hand, he resumed:

"But, Mr. Chuzzlewit, [illegible]

[illegible]

firm. Subject to human weaknesses, he was upheld by conscience.

Martin lay for some time with an expression on his face of silent wonder, not unmixed with rage; at length he muttered in a whisper: —

"What does this mean? Can the false-hearted boy have chosen such a tool as yonder fellow who has just gone out? Why not! He has conspired against me, like the rest, and they are but birds of one feather. A new plot — a new plot! Oh, self, self, self! At every turn, nothing but self!"

He fell to trifling, as he ceased to speak, with the ashes of the burnt paper in the candlestick. He did so, at first, in pure abstraction, but they presently became the subject of his thoughts.

"Another will made and destroyed," he said, "nothing determined on, nothing done, and I might have died to-night! I plainly see to what foul uses all this money will be put at last," he cried, almost writhing in the bed; "after filling me with cares and miseries all my life, it will perpetuate discord and bad passions when I am dead. So it always is. What lawsuits grow out of the graves of rich men, every day; sowing perjury, hatred, and lies among near kindred, where there should be nothing but love! Heaven help us, we have much to answer for! Oh, self, self, self! Every man for himself, and no creature for me!"

Universal self! Was there nothing of its shadow in these reflections, and in the history of Martin Chuzzlewit, on his own showing?

## CHAPTER IV

**FROM WHICH IT WILL APPEAR THAT IF UNION BE STRENG FAMILY AFFECTION BE PLEASANT TO CONTEMPLATE, TH ZLEWITS WERE THE STRONGEST AND MOST AGREEABLE IN THE WORLD.**

THAT worthy man Mr. Pecksniff, having taken leave cousin in the solemn terms recited in the last chapte drew to his own home, and remained there three whol not so much as going out for a walk beyond the bound his own garden, lest he should be hastily summoned bedside of his penitent and remorseful relative, whom ample benevolence, he had made up his mind to forgive dit nally, and to love on any terms. But, such s obstinacy and such the latter nature of that stern old t no repentant summons came, and the fourth day f Pecksniff apparently much further from his Christian than the first.

During the whole of this interval, he haunted the at all times and seasons in the day and night, and, re good for evil, evinced the deepest solicitude in the pro the celebrate invalid; insomuch that Mrs. Lupin w melted by his disinterested anxiety (for he often part required her to take notice that he would do the same stranger or peiper in the like conditions, and shed ma of admiration and delight.

Meantime old Martin Chuzzlewit remained shut up own chamber, and saw no person but his young com saving the hostess of the Blue Dragon, who was, at times, admitted to his presence. So surely as she ca the room, however, Martin feigned to fall asleep. It w when he and the young lady were alone that he would a word, even in answer to the simplest inquiry, thou Pecksniff could make out, by hard listening at the do they two being left together, he was talkative enough.

It happened on the fourth evening that Mr. Pecksniff, walking, as usual, into the bar of the Dragon, and finding no Mrs. Lupin there, went straight up stairs; purposing, in the fervour of his affectionate zeal, to apply his ear once more to the keyhole, and quiet his mind by assuring himself that the hard-hearted patient was going on well. It happened that Mr. Pecksniff, coming softly upon the dark passage into which a spiral ray of light usually darted through the same keyhole, was astonished to find no such ray visible; and it happened that Mr. Pecksniff, when he had felt his way to the chamber-door, stooping hurriedly down to ascertain by personal inspection whether the jealousy of the old man had caused this keyhole to be stopped on the inside, brought his head into such violent contact with another head that he could not help uttering in an audible voice the monosyllable "Oh!" which was, as it were, sharply unscrewed and jerked out of him by very anguish. It happened then, and lastly, that Mr. Pecksniff found himself immediately collared by something which smelt like several damp umbrellas, a barrel of beer, a cask of warm brandy and water, and a small parlour-full of stale tobacco smoke, mixed; and was straightway led down stairs into the bar from which he had lately come, where he found himself standing opposite to, and in the grasp of, a perfectly strange gentleman of still stranger appearance, who, with his disengaged hand, rubbed his own head very hard, and looked at him, Pecksniff, with an evil countenance.

The gentleman was of that order of appearance, which is currently termed shabby-genteel, though in respect of his dress he can hardly be said to have been in any extremities, as his fingers were a long way out of his gloves, and the soles of his feet were at an inconvenient distance from the upper leather of his boots. His nether garments were of a bluish grey — violent in its colours once, but sobered now by age and dinginess — and were so stretched and strained in a tough conflict between his braces and his straps that they appeared every moment in danger of flying asunder at the knees. His coat, in colour blue and of a military cut, was buttoned and frogged, up to his chin. His cravat was, in hue and pattern, like one of those mantles which hair-dressers are accustomed to wrap about their clients during the progress of the professional mysteries. His hat had arrived at such a pass that it would

ve been hard to determine whether it was originally w
or black. But he wore a moustache — a shaggy mousta
too; nothing in the meek and merciful way, but quite in
fierce and scornful style — the regular Satanic sort of th
and he wore, besides, a vast quantity of unbrushed hair.
was very dirty and very jaunty; very bold and very m
very swaggering and very slinking; very much like a man
might have been something better, and unspeakably like a
who deserved to be something worse.

"You were eaves-dropping at that door, you vagabon
said this gentleman.

Mr. Pecksniff cast him off, as Saint George might
repudiated the Dragon in that animal's last moments,
said: —

"Where is Mrs. Lupin, I wonder! can the good wo
possibly be aware that there is a person here who — "

"Stay!" said the gentleman. "Wait a bit. She
know. What then?"

"What then, sir?" cried Mr. Pecksniff. "What t
Do you know, sir, that I am the friend and relative of
sick gentleman? That I am his protector, his guar
his — "

"Not his niece's husband," interposed the stranger, "I '
sworn; for he was there before you."

"What do you mean?" said Mr. Pecksniff, with indig
surprise. "What do you tell me, sir?"

"Wait a bit!" cried the other. "Perhaps you are a co
— the cousin who lives in this place?"

"I *am* the cousin who lives in this place," replied the
of worth.

"Your name is Pecksniff?" said the gentleman.

"It is."

"I am proud to know you, and I ask your pardon,"
the gentleman touching his hat, and subsequently diving
hind his cravat for a shirt-collar, which, however, he di
succeed in bringing to the surface. "You behold in me,
one who has also an interest in that gentleman up st
Wait a bit."

As he said this, he touched the tip of his high nose
ray of intimation that he would let Mr. Pecksniff into a s
sently; and pulling off his hat, began to search inside

crown among a mass of crumpled documents and small pieces of what may be called the bark of broken cigars; whence he presently selected the cover of an old letter, begrimed with dirt and redolent of tobacco.

"Read that," he cried, giving it to Mr. Pecksniff.

"This is addressed to Chevy Slyme, Esquire," said that gentleman.

"You know Chevy Slyme, Esquire, I believe?" returned the stranger.

Mr. Pecksniff shrugged his shoulders as though he would say, "I know there is such a person, and I am sorry for it."

"Very good," remarked the gentleman. "That is my interest and business here." With that he made another dive for his shirt-collar, and brought up a string.

"Now this is very distressing, my friend," said Mr. Pecksniff, shaking his head and smiling composedly. "It is very distressing to me to be compelled to say that you are not the person you claim to be. I know Mr. Slyme, my friend; this will not do; honesty is the best policy; you had better not; you had, indeed."

"Stop!" cried the gentleman, stretching forth his right arm, which was so tightly wedged into his threadbare sleeve that it looked like a cloth sausage. "Wait a bit!"

He paused to establish himself immediately in front of the fire, with his back towards it. Then gathering the skirts of his coat under his left arm, and smoothing his moustache with his right thumb and forefinger, he resumed: —

"I understand your mistake, and I am not offended. Why? Because it 's complimentary. You suppose I would set myself up for Chevy Slyme? Sir, if there is a man on earth whom a gentleman would feel proud and honoured to be mistaken for, that man is my friend Slyme. For he is, without an exception, the highest-minded, the most independent-spirited, most original, spiritual, classical, talented, the most thoroughly Shaksperian, if not Miltonic, and at the same time the most disgustingly unappreciated dog I know. But, sir, I have not the vanity to attempt to pass for Slyme. Any other man in the wide world I am equal to; but Slyme is, I frankly confess, a great many cuts above me. Therefore, you are wrong."

"I judged from this," said Mr. Pecksniff, holding out the cover of the letter.

[redacted]



"No doubt you did," returned the gentleman. "But, Mr. Pecksniff, the whole thing resolves itself into an instance of the peculiarities of genius. Every man of true genius has his peculiarity. Sir, the peculiarity of my friend Slyme is that he is always waiting round the corner. He is perpetually round the corner, sir. He is round the corner at this instant. Now," said the gentleman, shaking his forefinger before his nose, and planting his legs wider apart as he looked attentively at Mr. Pecksniff's face, "that is a remarkably curious and [illegible] trait in Mr. Slyme's character, and, whenever Slyme's [illegible] comes to be written, that trait must be thoroughly [illegible] by his biographer, or society will not be satisfied. [illegible] me, society will not be satisfied!"

Mr. Pecksniff coughed.

"Slyme's biographer, sir, whoever he may be," [illegible] the gentleman, "must apply to me; or, if I am gone to that [illegible] his-name from which no thing[illegible] comes back, he [illegible] to my executors for leave to search among my papers. I [illegible] taken a few notes, [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] which [illegible] He [illegible] month, when he [illegible] wouldn't [illegible], which would have [illegible] Bonaparte [illegible] the French [illegible]."

"And pray," asked Mr. P[illegible] ease, "what may be Mr. S[illegible] permitted to inquire, who [illegible] own [illegible]

"In the [illegible] place," [illegible] the gentleman, [illegible] that I [illegible] that remark, and that I [illegible] and [illegible] In the next place, [illegible] My name, sir, is T[illegible] The name of M[illegible] I [illegible] [illegible] with the most [illegible] [illegible] War!"

Mr. P[illegible] [illegible] head.

"No [illegible]," said the gentleman. "That [illegible] father, and I [illegible] name. I [illegible] as Lu[illegible] I [illegible] Slyme to be [illegible]."

With this announcement he hurried away to the [illegible]

of the Blue Dragon, and almost immediately returned with a companion shorter than himself, who was wrapped in an old blue camlet cloak with a lining of faded scarlet. His sharp features being much pinched and nipped by long waiting in the cold, and his straggling red whiskers and frowzy hair being more than usually dishevelled from the same cause, he certainly looked rather unwholesome and uncomfortable than Shaksperian or Miltonic.

"Now," said Mr. Tigg, clapping one hand on the shoulder of his prepossessing friend, and calling Mr. Pecksniff's attention to him with the other, "you two are related, and relations never did agree, and never will; which is a wise dispensation and an inevitable thing, or there would be none but family parties, and everybody in the world would bore everybody else to death. If you were on good terms, I should consider you a most confoundedly unnatural pair; but standing towards each other as you do, I look upon you as a couple of devilish deep-thoughted fellows, who may be reasoned with to any extent."

Here Mr. Chevy Slyme, whose great abilities seemed one and all to point towards the sneaking quarter of the moral compass, nudged his friend stealthily with his elbow, and whispered in his ear.

"Chiv," said Mr. Tigg aloud, in the high tone of one who was not to be tampered with, "I shall come to that, presently. I act upon my own responsibility, or not at all. To the extent of such a trifling loan as a crownpiece to a man of your talents, I look upon Mr. Pecksniff as certain;" and seeing at this juncture that the expression of Mr. Pecksniff's face by no means betokened that he shared this certainty, Mr. Tigg laid his finger on his nose again for that gentleman's private and especial behoof, calling upon him thereby to take notice that the requisition of small loans was another instance of the peculiarities of genius as developed in his friend Slyme; that he, Tigg, winked at the same, because of the strong metaphysical interest which these weaknesses possessed, and that, in reference to his own personal advocacy of such small advances, he merely consulted the humour of his friend, without the least regard to his own advantage or necessities.

"Oh, Chiv, Chiv!" added Mr. Tigg, surveying his adopted brother with an air of profound contemplation after dismissing

this piece of pantomime. "You are, upon my life, a [illegible] instance of the little frailties that beset a mighty man [illegible] there had never been a telescope in the world, I should [illegible] been quite certain from my observation of you, Chuz, that [illegible] were spots on the sun! I wish I may die, if this isn't [illegible] queerest state of existence that we find ourselves forced [illegible] without knowing why or wherefore, Mr. Pecksniff! [illegible] never mind! Moralise as we will, the world goes on [illegible] Hamlet says, Hercules may lay about him with his [illegible] every possible direction, but he can't prevent the cats [illegible] making a most intolerable row on the roofs of the h[illegible] the dogs from being shot in the hot weather if they run [illegible] the streets unmuzzled. Life's a riddle, [illegible] a most infe[illegible] hard riddle to guess, Mr. Pecksniff. My own opinion is [illegible] like that celebrated conundrum, 'Why's a man in [illegible] man out of jail?' there's no answer to it. Upon my [illegible] body, it's the queerest sort of thing altogether [illegible] [illegible] Ha, ha!"

W[illegible] re[illegible] Mr. T[illegible]

"N[illegible] I [illegible]

[illegible]

"Every man," said Mr. Pecksniff, [illegible]

doubted right, (which I, for one, would not call in question or any earthly consideration — oh, no!) to regulate his own proceedings by his own likings and dislikings, supposing they are not immoral and not irreligious. I may feel in my own breast that Mr. Chuzzlewit does not regard — me, for instance, say me — with exactly that amount of Christian love which should subsist between us; I may feel grieved and hurt at the circumstance; still I may not rush to the conclusion that Mr. Chuzzlewit is wholly without a justification in all his coldnesses: Heaven forbid! Besides; how, Mr. Tigg," continued Pecksniff even more gravely and impressively than he had spoken yet — "how could Mr. Chuzzlewit be prevented from having these peculiar and most extraordinary confidences of which you speak, the existence of which I must admit, and which I cannot but deplore — for his sake? Consider, my good sir" — and here Mr. Pecksniff eyed him wistfully — "how very much at random you are talking."

"Why as to that," rejoined Tigg, "it certainly is a difficult question."

"Undoubtedly it is a difficult question," Mr. Pecksniff answered. As he spoke, he drew himself aloof, and seemed to grow more mindful, suddenly, of the moral gulf between himself and the creature he addressed. "Undoubtedly it is a very difficult question. And I am far from feeling sure that it is a question any one is authorised to discuss. Good evening to you."

"You don't know that the Spottletoes are here, I suppose?" said Mr. Tigg.

"What do you mean, sir? what Spottletoes?" asked Pecksniff, stopping abruptly on his way to the door.

"Mr. and Mrs. Spottletoe," said Chevy Slyme, Esquire, speaking aloud for the first time, and speaking very sulkily, shambling with his legs the while. "Spottletoe married my father's brother's child, didn't he? And Mrs. Spottletoe is Chuzzlewit's own niece, isn't she? She was his favourite once. You may well ask what Spottletoes."

"Now, upon my sacred word!" cried Mr. Pecksniff, looking upwards. "This is dreadful. The rapacity of these people is absolutely frightful!".

"It's not only the Spottletoes either, Tigg," said Slyme, looking at that gentleman, and speaking at Mr. Pecksniff.

evening. And so he took himself off, as little abashed by his recent failure as any gentleman would desire to be.

The meditations of Mr. Pecksniff that evening at the bar of the Dragon, and that night in his own house, were very serious and grave, indeed; the more especially as the intelligence he had received from Messrs. Tigg and Slyme touching the arrival of other members of the family was fully confirmed on more particular inquiry. For the Spottletoes had actually gone straight to the Dragon, where they were at that moment housed and mounting guard, and where their appearance had occasioned such a vast sensation that Mrs. Lupin, scenting their errand before they had been under her roof half an hour, carried the news herself with all possible secrecy straight to Mr. Pecksniff's house; indeed, it was her great caution in doing so which occasioned her to miss that gentleman, who entered at the front door of the Dragon, just as she emerged from the back one. Moreover, Mr. Anthony Chuzzlewit and his son Jonas were economically quartered at the Half Moon and Seven Stars, which was an obscure alehouse; and by the very next coach there came posting to the scene of action so many other affectionate members of the family (who quarrelled with each other, inside and out, all the way down, to the utter distraction of the coachman) that in less than four-and-twenty hours the scanty tavern accommodation was at a premium, and all the private lodgings in the place, amounting to full four beds and a sofa, rose cent. per cent. in the market.

In a word, things came to that pass that nearly the whole family sat down before the Blue Dragon, and formally invested it; and Martin Chuzzlewit was in a state of siege. But he resisted bravely; refusing to receive all letters, messages, and parcels; obstinately declining to treat with anybody; and holding out no hope or promise of capitulation. Meantime the family forces were perpetually encountering each other in divers parts of the neighbourhood; and, as no one branch of the Chuzzlewit tree had ever been known to agree with another, within the memory of man, there was such a skirmishing, and flouting, and snapping off of heads, in the metaphorical sense of that expression; such a bandying of words and calling of names; such an upturning of noses and wrinkling of brows; such a formal interment of good feelings and violent resurrection of ancient grievances, as had never been known in those

quiet parts since the earliest record of their civilised existence.

At length, in utter despair and hopelessness, some few of the belligerents began to speak to each other in only moderate terms of mutual aggravation; and nearly all addressed themselves with a show of tolerable decency to Mr. Pecksniff, in recognition of his high character and influential position. Thus, by little and little, they made common cause of Martin Chuzzlewit's obduracy, until it was agreed — if such a word can be used in connection with the Chuzzlewits — that there should be a general council and conference held at Mr. Pecksniff's house upon a certain day at noon, which all members of the family who had brought themselves within reach of the summons were forthwith bidden and invited, solemnly, to attend.

If ever Mr. Pecksniff wore an apostolic look, he wore it on this memorable day. If ever his unruffled smile proclaimed the words, "I am a messenger of peace!" that was its mission now. If ever man combined within himself all the mild qualities of the lamb with a considerable touch of the dove, and not a dash of the crocodile, or the least possible suggestion of the very mildest seasoning of the serpent, that man was he. And, oh, the two Miss Pecksniffs! Oh, the serene expression on the face of Charity, which seemed to say, "I know that all my family have injured me beyond the possibility of reparation, but I forgive them, for it is my duty so to do!" And, oh, the gay simplicity of Mercy; so charming, innocent, and infant-like, that if she had gone out walking by herself, and it had been a little earlier in the season, the robin-redbreast might have covered her with leaves against her will, believing her to be one of the sweet children in the wood, come out of it, and issuing forth once more to look for blackberries, in the young freshness of her heart! What words can paint the Pecksniffs in that trying hour? Oh, none; for words have naughty company among them, and the Pecksniffs were all goodness.

But when the company arrived! That was the time. When Mr. Pecksniff, rising from his seat at the table's head, with a daughter on either hand, received his guests in the best parlour and motioned them to chairs, with eyes so overflowing and countenance so damp with gracious perspiration that he may be said to have been in a kind of moist meekness. And

the company; the jealous, stony-hearted, distrustful [illegible] who were all shut up in themselves, and had no faith in [illegible] body, and would n't believe anything, and would [illegible] allow themselves to be softened or lulled asleep by the [illegible] sniffs than if they had been so many hedgehogs or [illegible]

First, there was Mr. Spottletoe, who was so bald [illegible] such big whiskers that he seemed to have stopped his [illegible] the sudden application of some powerful remedy, in the [illegible] act of falling off his head, and to have fastened it [illegible] on his face. Then there was Mrs. Spottletoe, w[illegible] much too slim for her years, and of a poetical [illegible] accustomed to inform her more intimate friends that [illegible] whiskers were "the lodestar of her existence;" and wh[illegible] now, by reason of her strong affection for her [illegible] wit, and the shock it gave her to be suspected of [illegible] designs upon him, dissolving [illegible] except [illegible] There were [illegible]

[illegible]

carried out. Then there was a solitary female cousin who was remarkable for nothing but being very deaf, and living by herself, and always having the tooth-ache. Then there was George Chuzzlewit, a gay bachelor cousin, who claimed to be young but had been younger, and was inclined to corpulency, and rather overfed himself, — to that extent, indeed, that his eyes were strained in their sockets, as if with constant surprise; and he had such an obvious disposition to pimples that the bright spots on his cravat, and the rich pattern on his waistcoat, and even his glittering trinkets, seemed to have broken out upon him, and not to have come into existence comfortably. Last of all, there were present Mr. Chevy Slyme and his friend Tigg. And it is worthy of remark that, although each person present disliked the other mainly because he or she *did* belong to the family, they one and all concurred in hating Mr. Tigg because he did n't.

Such was the pleasant little family circle now assembled in Mr. Pecksniff's best parlour, agreeably prepared to fall foul of Mr. Pecksniff or anybody else who might venture to say anything whatever upon any subject.

"This," said Mr. Pecksniff rising, and looking round upon them, with folded hands, "does me good. It does my daughters good. We thank you for assembling here. We are grateful to you with our whole hearts. It is a blessed distinction that you have conferred upon us, and, believe me," — it is impossible to conceive how he smiled here — "we shall not easily forget it."

"I am sorry to interrupt you, Pecksniff," remarked Mr. Spottletoe, with his whiskers in a very portentous state; "but you are assuming too much to yourself, sir. Who do you imagine has it in contemplation to confer a distinction upon *you*, sir?"

A general murmur echoed this inquiry and applauded it.

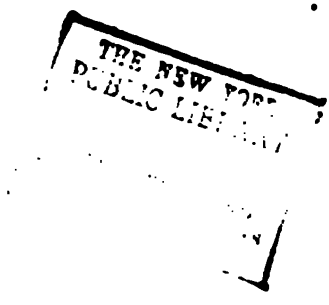
"If you are about to pursue the course with which you have begun, sir," pursued Mr. Spottletoe in a great heat, and giving a violent rap on the table with his knuckles, "the sooner you desist, and this assembly separates, the better. I am no stranger, sir, to your preposterous desire to be regarded as the head of this family, but I can tell *you*, sir —"

Oh, yes, indeed! *He* tell. *He!* What! He was the head, was he! From the strong-minded woman downwards

everybody fell, that instant, upon Mr. Spottletoe, who after vainly attempting to be heard in silence was fain to sit down again, folding his arms and shaking his head most wrathfully, and giving Mrs. Spottletoe to understand in dumb show that that scoundrel Pecksniff might go on for the present, but he would cut in presently and annihilate him.

"I am not sorry," said Mr. Pecksniff in resumption of his address, — "I am really not sorry that this little incident has happened. It is good to feel that we are met here without disguise. It is good to know that we have no reserve before each other, but are appearing freely in our own characters."

Here the eldest daughter of the strong-minded woman rose a little way from her seat, and trembling violently from head to foot, more as it seemed with passion than timidity, expressed a general hope that some people *would* appear in their own characters, if it were only for such a proceeding having the attraction of novelty to recommend it; and that, when they (meaning the some people before mentioned) talked about their relations, they would be careful to observe who was present in company at the time, otherwise it might come round to those relations' ears, in a way they little expected, and as to red noses (she observed) she had yet to learn that a red nose was any disgrace, inasmuch as people neither made nor coloured their own noses, but had that feature provided for them without being first consulted, though even upon that branch of the subject she had great doubts whether certain noses were redder than other noses, or, indeed, half so red as some. This remark being received with a shrill titter by the two sisters of the speaker, Miss Charity Pecksniff begged with much politeness to be informed whether any of those very low observations were levelled at her, and receiving no more explanatory answer than was conveyed in the adage "Those the cap fits, let them wear it," immediately commenced a somewhat acrimonious and personal retort, wherein she was much comforted and abetted by her sister Mercy, who laughed at the sally with great heartiness, indeed, far more naturally than it fell. And it being quite impossible that any difference of opinion can take place among women without every woman who is within hearing taking active part in it, the strong-minded woman and her two daughters, and Mrs. Spottletoe, and the old woman who was not at all disqualified from joining in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the dispute by reason of being perfectly unacquainted with its merits), one and all plunged into the quarrel directly.

The two Miss Pecksniffs being a pretty good match for the three Miss Chuzzlewits, and all five young ladies having, in the figurative language of the day, a great amount of steam to dispose of, the altercation would no doubt have been a long one but for the high valour and prowess of the strong-minded woman, who, in right of her reputation for powers of sarcasm, did so belabour and pummel Mrs. Spottletoe with taunting words that that poor lady, before the engagement was two minutes old, had no refuge but in tears. These she shed so plentifully, and so much to the agitation and grief of Mr. Spottletoe, that that gentleman, after holding his clenched fist close to Mr. Pecksniff's eyes, as if it were some natural curiosity, from the near inspection whereof he was likely to derive high gratification and improvement, and after offering (for no particular reason that anybody could discover) to kick Mr. George Chuzzlewit for, and in consideration of, the trifling sum of sixpence, took his wife under his arm, and indignantly withdrew. This diversion, by distracting the attention of the combatants, put an end to the strife, which, after breaking out afresh some twice or thrice in certain inconsiderable spurts and dashes, died away in silence.

It was then that Mr. Pecksniff once more rose from his chair. It was then that the two Miss Pecksniffs composed themselves to look as if there were no such beings — not to say present, but in the whole compass of the world — as the three Miss Chuzzlewits; while the three Miss Chuzzlewits became equally unconscious of the existence of the two Miss Pecksniffs.

"It is to be lamented," said Mr. Pecksniff, with a forgiving recollection of Mr. Spottletoe's fist, "that our friend should have withdrawn himself so very hastily, though we have cause for mutual congratulation even in that, since we are assured that he is not distrustful of us in regard to anything we may say or do, while he is absent. Now, that is very soothing, is it not?"

"Pecksniff," said Anthony, who had been watching the whole party with peculiar keenness from the first "don't you be a hypocrite."

"A what, my good sir?" demanded Mr. Pecksniff.

"A hypocrite."

"Charity, my dear," said Mr. Pecksniff, "when I take my

chamber candlestick to-night, remind me to be more than usually particular in praying for Mr. Anthony Chuzzlewit, who has done me an injustice."

This was said in a very bland voice, and aside, as being addressed to his daughter's private ear. With a cheerfulness of conscience, prompting almost a sprightly demeanour, he then resumed: —

"All our thoughts centring in our very dear, but unkind relative, and he being as it were beyond our reach, we are met to-day, really as if we were a funeral party, except — a blessed exception — that there is no body in the house."

The strong-minded lady was not at all sure that this was a blessed exception. Quite the contrary.

"Well, my dear madam!" said Mr. Pecksniff. "Be that as it may, here we are; and being here, we are to consider whether it is possible, by any justifiable means — "

"Why, you know as well as I," said the strong-minded lady, "that any means are justifiable in such a case, don't you?"

"Very good, my dear madam, very good — whether it is possible by *any* means — we will say by *any* means — to open the eyes of our valued relative to his present infatuation. Whether it is possible to make him acquainted by any means with the real character and purpose of that young female who is strange, whose very strange position, in reference to himself" — here Mr. Pecksniff sunk his voice to an impressive whisper — "really casts a shadow of disgrace and shame upon this family, and who, we know" — here he raised his voice again — "else why is she his companion? harbours the very basest designs upon his weakness and his property."

In their strong feeling on this point, they, who agreed in nothing else, all concurred as one mind. Good Heaven, that she should harbour designs upon his property! The strong-minded lady was for poison, her three daughters were for Bridewell and bread and water, the cousin with the tooth-ache advocated Botany Bay, the two Miss Pecksniffs suggested flogging. Nobody but Mr. Tigg, who, notwithstanding his extreme shabbiness, was still understood to be in some sort a lady's man, in right of his upper lip and his frogs, indicated a doubt of the justifiable nature of these measures, and he only ogled the three Miss Chuzzlewits with the least admixture of hauteur in his admiration, as though he would observe, "You

are positively down upon her to too great an extent, my sweet creatures, upon my soul, you are!"

"Now," said Mr. Pecksniff, crossing his two forefingers in a manner which was at once conciliatory and argumentative; "I will not, upon the one hand, go so far as to say that she deserves all the inflictions which have been so very forcibly and hilariously suggested" — one of his ornamental sentences; "nor will I, upon the other, on any account compromise my common understanding as a man by making the assertion that she does not. What I would observe is that I think some practical means might be devised of inducing our respected — shall I say our revered — "

"No!" interposed the strong-minded woman in a loud voice.

"Then I will not," said Mr. Pecksniff. "You are quite right, my dear madam, and I appreciate and thank you for your discriminating objection — our respected relative to dispose himself to listen to the promptings of nature, and not to the — "

"Go on, Pa!" cried Mercy.

"Why, the truth is, my dear," said Mr. Pecksniff, smiling upon his assembled kindred, "that I am at a loss for a word. The name of those fabulous animals (pagan, I regret to say) who used to sing in the water has quite escaped me."

Mr. George Chuzzlewit suggested "Swans."

"No," said Mr. Pecksniff; "not swans. Very like swans, too. Thank you."

The nephew with the outline of a countenance, speaking for the first and last time on that occasion, propounded "Oysters."

"No," said Mr. Pecksniff, with his own peculiar urbanity, "nor oysters. But by no means unlike oysters; a very excellent idea; thank you, my dear sir, very much. Wait! Sirens. Dear me! sirens, of course. I think, I say, that means might be devised of disposing our respected relative to listen to the promptings of nature, and not to the siren-like delusions of art. Now we must not lose sight of the fact that our esteemed friend has a grandson, to whom he was, until lately, very much attached, and whom I could have wished to see here to-day, for I have a real and deep regard for him. A fine young man; a very fine young man! I would submit to you, whether we might not remove Mr. Chuzzlewit's distrust of us, and vindicate our own disinterestedness by — "

"If Mr. George Chuzzlewit has anything to say to me," interposed the strong-minded woman sternly, "I beg him to speak out, like a man; and not to look at me and my daughters as if he could eat us."

"As to looking, I have heard it said, Mrs. Ned," returned Mr. George angrily, "that a cat is free to contemplate a monarch; and therefore I hope I have some right, having been born a member of this family, to look at a person who only came into it by marriage. As to eating, I beg to say whatever bitterness your jealousies and disappointed expectations may suggest to you, that I am not a cannibal, ma'am."

"I don't know that!" cried the strong-minded woman.

"At all events, if I was a cannibal," said Mr. George Chuzzlewit, greatly stimulated by this retort, "I think it would occur to me that a lady who had outlived three husbands and suffered so very little from their loss must be most uncommonly tough."

The strong-minded woman immediately rose.

"And I will further add," said Mr. George, nobbling his head violently at every second syllable, "naming no names, and therefore hurting nobody but those whose consciences tell them they are alluded to, that I think it would be much more decent and becoming, if those who hooked and crooked themselves into this family by getting on the blind side of some of its members before marriage, and manslaughtering them afterwards by crowing over them to that strong pitch that they were glad to die, would refrain from acting the part of vultures in regard to other members of this family who are living. I think it would be full as well, if not better, if those individuals would keep at home, contenting themselves with what they have got cluckily for them already, instead of hovering about, and thrusting their fingers into a family pie, which they flavour much more than enough, I can tell them, when they are fifty miles away."

"I might have been prepared for this!" cried the strong-minded woman, looking about her with a disdainful smile as she moved towards the door, followed by her three daughters. "indeed I was fully prepared for it, from the first. What else could I expect in such an atmosphere as this!"

"Don't direct your half-pay-officer's gaze at me, ma'am, if you please," interposed Miss Charity, "for I won't bear it."

This was a smart stab at a pension enjoyed by the strong-minded woman, during her second widowhood and before her last coverture. It told immensely.

"I passed from the memory of a grateful country, you very miserable minx," said Mrs. Ned, "when I entered this family; and I feel now, though I did not feel then, that it served me right, and that I lost my claim upon the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland when I so degraded myself. Now my dears, if you 're quite ready, and have sufficiently improved yourselves by taking to heart the genteel example of these two young ladies, I think we 'll go. Mr. Pecksniff, we are very much obliged to you, really. We came to be entertained, and you have far surpassed our utmost expectations in the amusement you have provided for us. Thank you. Good-by!"

With such departing words did this strong-minded female paralyse the Pecksniffian energies; and so she swept out of the room, and out of the house, attended by her daughters, who, as with one accord, elevated their three noses in the air and joined in a contemptuous titter. As they passed the parlour window on the outside, they were seen to counterfeit a perfect transport of delight among themselves; and with this final blow and great discouragement for those within, they vanished.

Before Mr. Pecksniff or any of his remaining visitors could offer a remark, another figure passed this window, coming at a great rate in the opposite direction; and immediately afterwards Mr. Spottletoe burst into the chamber. Compared with his present state of heat, he had gone out a man of snow or ice. His head distilled such oil upon his whiskers that they were rich and clogged with unctuous drops; his face was violently inflamed, his limbs trembled; and he gasped and strove for breath.

"My good sir!" cried Mr. Pecksniff.

"Oh yes!" returned the other; "oh yes, certainly! Oh, to be sure! Oh, of course! You hear him? You hear him? all of you!"

"What 's the matter!" cried several voices.

"Oh nothing!" cried Spottletoe, still gasping. "Nothing at all! It 's of no consequence! Ask him! *He* 'll tell you!"

"I do not understand our friend," said Mr. Pecksniff, looking about him in utter amazement. "I assure you that he is quite unintelligible to me."

"Unintelligible, sir!" cried the other. "Unintelligible! Do you mean to say, sir, that you don't know what has happened! That you have n't decoyed us here, and laid a plot and a plan against us! Will you venture to say that you did n't know Mr. Chuzzlewit was going, sir, and that you don't know he 's gone, sir!"

"Gone!" was the general cry.

"Gone," echoed Mr. Spottletoe. "Gone while we were sitting here. Gone. Nobody knows where he 's gone — oh, of course not! Nobody knew he was going — oh, of course not! The landlady thought up to the very last moment that they were merely going for a ride; she had no other suspicion. Oh, of course not! She 's not this fellow's creature. Oh, of course not!"

Adding to these exclamations a kind of ironical howl, and gazing upon the company for one brief instant afterwards, in a sudden silence, the irritated gentleman started off again at the same tremendous pace, and was seen no more.

It was in vain for Mr. Pecksniff to assure them that the new and opportune evasion of the family was at least as great a shock and surprise to him as to anybody else. Of all the bullyings and denunciations that were ever heaped on one unlucky head, none can ever have exceeded in energy and heartiness those with which he was complimented by each of his remaining relatives, singly, upon bidding him farewell.

The moral position taken by Mr. Tigg was something quite tremendous; and the deaf cousin, who had the complicated aggravation of seeing all the proceedings and hearing nothing but the catastrophe, actually scraped her shoes upon the scraper, and afterwards distributed impressions of them all over the top step, in token that she shook the dust from her feet before quitting that dissembling and perfidious mansion.

Mr. Pecksniff had, in short, but one comfort, and that was the knowledge that all these his relations and friends had hated him to the very utmost extent before; and that he, for his part, had not distributed among them any more love, than, with his ample capital in that respect, he could comfortably afford to part with. This view of his affairs yielded him great consolation; and the fact deserves to be noted, as showing with what ease a good man may be consoled under circumstances of failure and disappointment.

## CHAPTER V

CONTAINING A FULL ACCOUNT OF THE INSTALLATION OF MR. PECKSNIFF'S NEW PUPIL INTO THE BOSOM OF MR. PECKSNIFF'S FAMILY, WITH ALL THE FESTIVITIES HELD ON THAT OCCASION, AND THE GREAT ENJOYMENT OF MR. PINCH.

THE best of architects and land surveyors kept a horse, in whom the enemies already mentioned more than once in these pages pretended to detect a fanciful resemblance to his master. Not in his outward person, for he was a raw-boned, haggard horse, always on a much shorter allowance of corn than Mr. Pecksniff; but in his moral character, wherein, said they, he was full of promise but of no performance. He was always, in a manner, going to go, and never going. When at his slowest rate of travelling, he would sometimes lift up his legs so high, and display such mighty action, that it was difficult to believe he was doing less than fourteen miles an hour; and he was for ever so perfectly satisfied with his own speed, and so little disconcerted by opportunities of comparing himself with the fastest trotters, that the illusion was the more difficult of resistance. He was a kind of animal who infused into the breasts of strangers a lively sense of hope, and possessed all those who knew him better with a grim despair. In what respect, having these points of character, he might be fairly likened to his master, that good man's slanderers only can explain. But it is a melancholy truth, and a deplorable instance of the uncharitableness of the world, that they made the comparison.

In this horse, and the hooded vehicle, whatever its proper name might be, to which he was usually harnessed — it was more like a gig with a tumour than anything else — all Mr. Pinch's thoughts and wishes centred, one bright frosty morning; for with this gallant equipage he was about to drive to Salisbury alone, there to meet with the new pupil, and thence to bring him home in triumph.

Blessings on thy simple heart, Tom Pinch, how proudly

dost thou button up that scanty coat, called by a sad misnomer for these many years a "great" one; and how thoroughly as with thy cheerful voice thou pleasantly adjurest Sam the hostler "not to let him go yet," dost thou believe that quadruped desires to go, and would go if he might! Who could repress a smile — of love for thee, Tom Pinch, and not in jest at thy expense, for thou art poor enough already, Heaven knows — to think that such a holiday as lies before thee, should awaken that quick flow and hurry of the spirits, in which thou settest down again, almost untasted, on the kitchen window-sill, that great white mug (put by, by thy own hands last night, that breakfast might not hold thee late), and layest yonder crust upon the seat beside thee to be eaten on the road, when thou art calmer in thy high rejoicing! Who, as thou drivest off a happy man, and noddest with a grateful lovingness to Pecksniff in his nightcap at his chamber-window, would not cry, "Heaven speed thee, Tom, and send that thou wert going off for ever to some quiet home where thou mightst live at peace, and sorrow should not touch thee!"

What better time for driving, riding, walking, moving through the air by any means, than a fresh, frosty morning, when hope runs cheerily through the veins with the brisk blood, and tingles in the frame from head to foot! This was the glad commencement of a bracing day in early winter, such as may put the languid summer season (speaking of it when it can't be had) to the blush, and shame the spring for being sometimes cold by halves. The sheep-bells rang as clearly in the vigorous air as if they felt its wholesome influence like living creatures; the trees, in lieu of leaves or blossoms, shed upon the ground a frosty rime that sparkled as it fell, and might have been the dust of diamonds — so it was, to Tom. From cottage chimneys smoke went streaming up high, high, as if the earth had lost its grossness, being so fair, and must not be oppressed by heavy vapour. The crust of ice on the else rippling brook was so transparent, and so thin in texture, that the lively water might, of its own free will, have stopped — in Tom's glad mind it had — to look upon the lovely morning. And lest the sun should break this charm too eagerly, there moved between him and the ground a mist like that which waits upon the moon on summer nights — the very same to Tom — and wooed him to dissolve it gently.

Tom Pinch went on; not fast, but with a sense of rapid motion, which did just as well; and as he went, all kinds of things occurred to keep him happy. Thus when he came within sight of the turnpike, and was — oh, a long way off! — he saw the tollman's wife, who had that moment checked a wagon, run back into the little house again like mad, to say (she knew) that Mr. Pinch was coming up. And she was right, for when he drew within hail of the gate, forth rushed the tollman's children, shrieking in tiny chorus, "Mr. Pinch!" — to Tom's intense delight. The very tollman, though an ugly chap in general, and one whom folks were rather shy of handling, came out himself to take the toll, and give him rough good morning: and that with all this, and a glimpse of the family breakfast on a little round table before the fire, the crust Tom Pinch had brought away with him acquired as rich a flavour as though it had been cut from off a fairy loaf.

But there was more than this. It was not only the married people and the children who gave Tom Pinch a welcome as he passed. No, no. Sparkling eyes and snowy breasts came hurriedly to many an upper casement as he clattered by, and gave him back his greeting; not stinted either, but sevenfold, good measure. They were all merry — they all laughed. And some of the wickedest among them even kissed their hands as Tom looked back. For who minded poor Mr. Pinch? There was no harm in *him*.

And now the morning grew so fair, and all things were so wide awake and gay, that the sun seeming to say — Tom had no doubt he said, "I can't stand it any longer; I must have a look" — streamed out in radiant majesty. The mist, too shy and gentle for such lusty company, fled off, quite scared, before it; and as it swept away, the hills and mounds and distant pasture lands, teeming with placid sheep and noisy crows, came out as bright as though they were unrolled brand-new for the occasion. In compliment to which discovery, the brook stood still no longer, but ran briskly off to bear the tidings to the water-mill, three miles away.

Mr. Pinch was jogging along, full of pleasant thoughts and cheerful influences, when he saw, upon the path before him, going in the same direction with himself, a traveller on foot, who walked with a light, quick step, and sang as he went — for certain in a very loud voice, but not unmusically. He was

a young fellow of some five or six-and-twenty perhaps, and was dressed in such a free and fly-away fashion that the long ends of his loose red neckcloth were streaming out behind him quite as often as before; and the bunch of bright winter berries in the buttonhole of his velveteen coat was as visible to Mr. Pinch's rearward observation, as if he had worn that garment wrong side foremost. He continued to sing with so much energy that he did not hear the sound of wheels until it was close behind him; when he turned a whimsical face and very merry pair of blue eyes on Mr. Pinch, and checked himself directly.

"Why, Mark!" said Tom Pinch stopping, "who'd have thought of seeing you here! Well, this is surprising!"

Mark touched his hat, and said, with a very sudden decrease of vivacity, that he was going to Salisbury.

"And how spruce you are, too!" said Mr. Pinch, surveying him with great pleasure. "Really I didn't think you were half such a tight-made fellow, Mark!"

"Thankee, Mr. Pinch. Pretty well for that, I believe. It's not my fault, you know. With regard to being spruce, sir, that's where it is, you see." And here he looked particularly gloomy.

"Where what is!" Mr. Pinch demanded.

"Where the aggravation of it is. Any man may be in good spirits and good temper when he's well dressed. There's much credit in that. If I was very ragged and very dirty then I should begin to feel I had gained a point, Mr. Pinch."

"So you were singing just now, to bear up, as it were, against being well dressed, eh, Mark!" said Pinch.

"Your conversation's always equal to print, sir," rejoined Mark, with a broad grin. "That was it."

"Well!" cried Pinch, "you are the strangest young man, Mark, I ever knew in my life. I always thought so, but now I am quite certain of it. I am going to Salisbury, too. Will you get in! I shall be very glad of your company."

The young fellow made his acknowledgments and accepted the offer, stepping into the carriage directly, and seating himself on the very edge of the seat with his body half out of it, to express his being there on sufferance, and by the politeness of Mr Pinch. As they went along, the conversation proceeded after this manner.

"I more than half believed, just now, seeing you so very smart," said Pinch, "that you must be going to be married, Mark."

"Well, sir, I 've thought of that, too," he replied. "There might be some credit in being jolly with a wife, 'specially if the children had the measles and that, and was very fractious indeed. But I 'm a'most afraid to try it. I don't see my way clear."

"You 're not very fond of anybody, perhaps?" said Pinch.

"Not particular, sir, I think."

"But the way would be, you know, Mark, according to your views of things," said Mr. Pinch, "to marry somebody you did n't like, and who was very disagreeable."

"So it would, sir, but that might be carrying out a principle a little too far, might n't it?"

"Perhaps it might," said Mr. Pinch. At which they both laughed gaily.

"Lord bless you, sir," said Mark, "you don't half know me, though. I don't believe there ever was a man as could come out so strong under circumstances that would make other men miserable as I could, if I could only get a chance. But I can't get a chance. It 's my opinion that nobody never will know half of what 's in me, unless something very unexpected turns up. And I don't see any prospect of that. I 'm a going to leave the Dragon, sir."

"Going to leave the Dragon!" cried Mr. Pinch, looking at him with great astonishment. "Why, Mark, you take my breath away!"

"Yes, sir," he rejoined, looking straight before him and a long way off, as men do sometimes when they cogitate profoundly. "What 's the use of my stopping at the Dragon? It ain't at all the sort of place for *me*. When I left London (I 'm a Kentish man by birth, though), and took that sitivation here, I quite made up my mind that it was the dullest little out-of-the-way corner in England, and that there would be some credit in being jolly under such circumstances. But, Lord, there 's no dulness at the Dragon! Skittles, cricket, quoits, nine-pins, comic songs, chorusses, company round the chimney corner every winter's evening — any man could be jolly at the Dragon. There 's no credit in *that*."

"But if common report be true for once, Mark, as I think

it is, being able to confirm it by what I know myself," said Mr. Pinch, "you are the cause of half this merriment, and set it going."

"There may be something in that, too, sir," answered Mark. "But that 's no consolation."

"Well!" said Mr. Pinch, after a short silence, his usually subdued tone being even more subdued than ever. "I can hardly think enough of what you tell me. Why, what will become of Mrs. Lupin, Mark?"

Mark looked more fixedly before him, and further off still, as he answered that he did n't suppose it would be much of an object to her. There were plenty of smart young fellows as would be glad of the place. He knew a dozen himself.

"That 's probable enough," said Mr. Pinch, "but I am not at all sure that Mrs. Lupin would be glad of them. Why, I always supposed that Mrs. Lupin and you would make a match of it, Mark: and so did every one, as far as I know."

"I never," Mark replied, in some confusion, "said nothing as was in a direct way courting-like to her, nor she to me, but I don't know what I might n't do one of these odd times, and what she might n't say in answer. Well, sir, *that* would n't suit."

"Not to be landlord of the Dragon, Mark?" cried Mr. Pinch.

"No, sir, certainly not," returned the other, withdrawing his gaze from the horizon, and looking at his fellow-traveller. "Why, that would be the ruin of a man like me. I go and sit down comfortably for life, and no man never finds me out. What would be the credit of the landlord of the Dragon's being jolly? why, he could n't help it, if he tried."

"Does Mrs. Lupin know you are going to leave her?" Mr. Pinch inquired.

"I have n't broke it to her yet, sir, but I must. I 'm looking out this morning for something new and suitable," he said, nodding towards the city.

"What kind of thing now?" Mr. Pinch demanded.

"I was thinking," Mark replied, "of something in the grave-digging way."

"Good Gracious, Mark!" cried Mr. Pinch.

"It 's a good damp wormy sort of business, sir," said Mark, shaking his head argumentatively, "and there might be some

credit in being jolly, with one's mind in that pursuit, unless grave-diggers is usually given that way; which would be a drawback. You don't happen to know how that is, in general, do you, sir?"

"No," said Mr. Pinch, "I don't indeed. I never thought upon the subject."

"In case of that not turning out as well as one could wish, you know," said Mark, musing again, "there's other businesses. Undertaking now. That's gloomy. There might be credit to be gained there. A broker's man in a poor neighbourhood would n't be bad perhaps. A jailor sees a deal of misery. A doctor's man is in the very midst of murder. A bailiff's ain't a lively office nat'rally. Even a tax gatherer must find his feelings rather worked upon, at times. There's lots of trades in which I should have an opportunity, I think?"

Mr. Pinch was so perfectly overwhelmed by these remarks that he could do nothing but occasionally exchange a word or two on some indifferent subject, and cast sidelong glances at the bright face of his odd friend (who seemed quite unconscious of his observation), until they reached a certain corner of the road, close upon the outskirts of the city, when Mark said he would jump down there, if he pleased.

"But bless my soul, Mark," said Mr. Pinch, who in the progress of his observation just then made the discovery that the bosom of his companion's shirt was as much exposed as if it were midsummer, and was ruffled by every breath of air, "why don't you wear a waistcoat?"

"What's the good of one, sir?" asked Mark.

"Good of one?" said Mr. Pinch. "Why, to keep your chest warm."

"Lord love you, sir!" cried Mark, "you don't know me. *My* chest don't want no warming. Even if it did, what would no waistcoat bring it to? Inflammation of the lungs, perhaps? Well, there'd be some credit in being jolly, with an inflammation of the lungs."

As Mr. Pinch returned no other answer than such as was conveyed in his drawing his breath very hard, and opening his eyes very wide, and nodding his head very much, Mark thanked him for his ride, and without troubling him to stop, jumped lightly down. And away he fluttered, with his red

neckerchief, and his open coat, down a cross-lane: tur
back from time to time to nod to Mr. Pinch, and looking
of the most careless, good-humoured, comical fellows in
His late companion, with a thoughtful face, pursued his
to Salisbury.

Mr. Pinch had a shrewd notion that Salisbury was a
desperate sort of place, an exceeding wild and dissipated
and when he had put up the horse, and given the hostl
understand that he would look in again in the course o
hour or two to see him take his corn, he set forth on a
about the streets with a vague and not unpleasant idea
they teemed with all kinds of mystery and bedevilment.
one of his quiet habits this little delusion was greatly ass
by the circumstance of its being market-day, and the thore
fares about the market-place being filled with carts, ho
donkeys, baskets, wagons, garden stuff, meat, tripe, pies,
try, and hucksters' wares of every opposite description
possible variety of character. Then there were young fa
and old farmers, with smock frocks, brown great-coats,
great-coats, red worsted comforters, leather leggings, w
shaped hats, hunting-whips, and rough sticks, standing
in groups or talking noisily together on the tavern step
paying and receiving huge amounts of greasy wealth, wit
assistance of such bulky pocket-books that when they w
their pockets it was apoplexy to get them out, and when
were out it was spasms to get them in again. Also
were farmers' wives in beaver bonnets and red cloaks,
shaggy horses purged of all earthly passions, who went
into all manner of places without desiring to know why
who, if required, would have stood still in a chine
with a complete dinner-service at each hoof. Also a
many dogs, who were strongly interested in the state
market and the bargains of their masters, and a great cond
of tongues, both brute and human.

Mr. Pinch regarded everything exposed for sale with
delight, and was particularly struck by the itinerant cu
which he considered of the very keenest kind, inasmuch
he purchased a pocket-knife with seven blades in it, an
a cut as he afterwards found out among them. Wh
had exhausted the market-place, and watched the farmer
into the market dinner, he went back to look after the

Having seen him eat unto his heart's content, he issued forth again, to wander round the town and regale himself with the shop windows; previously taking a long stare at the bank, and wondering in what direction underground the caverns might be where they kept the money; and turning to look back at one or two young men who passed him, whom he knew to be articled to solicitors in the town; and who had a sort of fearful interest in his eyes, as jolly dogs who knew a thing or two, and kept it up tremendously.

But the shops. First of all, there were the jewellers' shops, with all the treasures of the earth displayed therein, and such large silver watches hanging up in every pane of glass, that if they were anything but first-rate goers it certainly was not because the works could decently complain of want of room. In good sooth they were big enough, and perhaps, as the saying is, ugly enough, to be the most correct of all mechanical performers — in Mr. Pinch's eyes, however, they were smaller than Geneva ware; and when he saw one very bloated watch announced as a repeater, gifted with the uncommon power of striking every quarter of an hour inside the pocket of its happy owner, he almost wished that he were rich enough to buy it.

But what were even gold and silver, precious stones and clockwork, to the bookshops, whence a pleasant smell of paper freshly pressed came issuing forth, awakening instant recollections of some new grammar had at school, long time ago, with "Master Pinch, Grove House Academy," inscribed in faultless writing on the fly-leaf! That whiff of russia leather, too, and all those rows on rows of volumes, neatly ranged within — what happiness did they suggest! And in the window were the spick-and-span new works from London, with the title-pages, and sometimes even the first page of the first chapter, laid wide open; tempting unwary men to begin to read the book, and then, in the impossibility of turning over, to rush blindly in and buy it! Here too were the dainty frontispiece and trim vignette, pointing like hand-posts on the outskirts of great cities to the rich stock of incident beyond; and store of books, with many a grave portrait and time-honoured name, whose matter he knew well, and would have given mines to have, in any form, upon the narrow shelf beside his bed at Mr. Pecksniff's. What a heart-breaking shop it was!

There was another, not quite so bad at first, but still a trying shop, where children's books were sold, and where poor Robinson Crusoe stood alone in his might, with dog and hatchet, goat-skin cap and fowling-pieces; calmly surveying Philip Quarll and the host of imitators round him, and calling Mr. Pinch to witness that he, of all the crowd, impressed on solitary foot-print on the shore of boyish memory, whereof the tread of generations should not stir the lightest grain of sand. And there too were the Persian tales, with flying chests, and students of enchanted books shut up for years in caverns: and there too was Abudah, the merchant, with the terrible little old woman hobbling out of the box in his bedroom: and there the mighty talisman — the rare Arabian Nights — with Cassim Baba, divided by four, like the ghost of a dreadful sum, hanging up, all gory, in the robbers' cave. Which matchless wonders, coming fast on Mr. Pinch's mind, did so rub up and chafe that wonderful lamp within him, that when he turned his face towards the busy street, a crowd of phantoms waited on his pleasure, and he lived again, with new delight, the happy days before the Pecksniff era.

He had less interest now in the chemists' shops, with their great glowing bottles (with smaller repositories of brightness in their very stoppers); and in their agreeable compromises between medicine and perfumery, in the shape of toothsome lozenges and virgin honey. Neither had he the least regard (but he never had much) for the tailors', where the newest metropolitan waistcoat patterns were hanging up, which by some strange transformation always looked amazing there, and never appeared at all like the same thing anywhere else. But he stopped to read the playbill at the theatre, and surveyed the doorway with a kind of awe, which was not diminished when a sallow gentleman with long dark hair came out, and told a boy to run home to his lodgings and bring down his broadsword. Mr. Pinch stood rooted to the spot on hearing this, and might have stood there until dark, but that the old cathedral bell began to ring for vesper service, on which he tore himself away.

Now, the organist's assistant was a friend of Mr. Pinch's, which was a good thing, for he too was a very quiet, gentle soul, and had been, like Tom, a kind of old-fashioned boy at school, though well liked by the noisy fellows too. As good luck would have it (Tom always said he had great good luck)

:he assistant chanced that very afternoon to be on duty by him-
elf, with no one in the dusty organ-loft but Tom: so while he
)layed Tom helped him with the stops; and finally, the service
eing just over, Tom took the organ himself. It was then turn-
ng dark, and the yellow light that streamed in through the
ncient windows in the choir was mingled with a murky red.
As the grand tones resounded through the church, they seemed,
o Tom, to find an echo in the depth of every ancient tomb, no
ess than in the deep mystery of his own heart. Great thoughts
nd hopes came crowding on his mind as the rich music rolled
ipon the air, and yet among them — something more grave and
olemn in their purpose, but the same — were all the images of
that day, down to its very lightest recollection of childhood.
The feeling that the sounds awakened, in the moment of their
existence, seemed to include his whole life and being; and as
the surrounding realities of stone and wood and glass grew dim-
mer in the darkness, these visions grew so much the brighter
that Tom might have forgotten the new pupil and the expectant
master, and have sat there pouring out his grateful heart till
midnight, but for a very earthy old verger insisting on locking up
the cathedral forthwith. So he took leave of his friend, with
many thanks, groped his way out, as well as he could, into
the now lamp-lighted streets, and hurried off to get his dinner.

All the farmers being by this time jogging homewards, there
was nobody in the sanded parlour of the tavern where he had
left the horse; so he had his little table drawn out close before
the fire, and fell to work upon a well-cooked steak and smoking
hot potatoes, with a strong appreciation of their excellence and
a very keen sense of enjoyment. Beside him, too, there stood
a jug of most stupendous Wiltshire beer; and the effect of the
whole was so transcendent, that he was obliged every now and
then to lay down his knife and fork, rub his hands, and think
about it. By the time the cheese and celery came, Mr. Pinch
had taken a book out of his pocket, and could afford to trifle
with the viands; now eating a little, now drinking a little, now
reading a little, and now stopping to wonder what sort of a
young man the new pupil would turn out to be. He had
passed from this latter theme and was deep in his book again,
when the door opened, and another guest came in, bringing with
him such a quantity of cold air that he positively seemed at
first to put the fire out.

"Very hard frost to-night, sir," said the new-comer, courteously acknowledging Mr. Pinch's withdrawal of the little table that he might have place. "Don't disturb yourself, I beg."

Though he said this with a vast amount of consideration for Mr. Pinch's comfort, he dragged one of the great leather-bottomed chairs to the very centre of the hearth, notwithstanding; and sat down in front of the fire, with a foot on each hob.

"My feet are quite numbed. Ah! Bitter cold, to be sure."

"You have been in the air some considerable time, I dare say?" said Mr. Pinch.

"All day. Outside a coach, too."

"That accounts for his making the room so cool," thought Mr. Pinch. "Poor fellow! How thoroughly chilled he must be!"

The stranger became thoughtful, likewise, and sat for five or ten minutes looking at the fire in silence. At length he rose and divested himself of his shawl and great-coat, which (far different from Mr. Pinch's) was a very warm and thick one, but he was not a whit more conversational out of his great-coat than in it, for he sat down again in the same place and attitude, and leaning back in his chair, began to bite his nails. He was young — one-and-twenty, perhaps — and handsome, with a keen dark eye, and a quickness of look and manner which made Tom sensible of a great contrast in his own bearing, and caused him to feel even more shy than usual.

There was a clock in the room, which the stranger often turned to look at. Tom made frequent reference to it also, partly from a nervous sympathy with its taciturn companion, and partly because the new pupil was to inquire for him at half after six, and the hands were getting on towards that hour. Whenever the stranger caught him looking at this clock, a kind of confusion came upon Tom as if he had been found out in something, and it was a perception of his uneasiness which caused the younger man to say, perhaps, with a smile —

"We both appear to be rather particular about the time. The fact is, I have an engagement to meet a gentleman here."

"So have I," said Mr. Pinch.

"At half past six," said the stranger.

"At half-past six," said Tom in the very same breath; whereupon the other looked at him with some surprise.

"The young gentleman I expect," remarked Tom timidly,

"was to inquire at that time for a person by the name of Pinch."

"Dear me!" cried the other, jumping up. "And I have been keeping the fire from you all this while! I had no idea you were Mr. Pinch. I am the Mr. Martin for whom you were to inquire. Pray excuse me. How do you do? Oh, do draw nearer, pray!"

"Thank you," said Tom, "thank you. I am not at all cold, and you are; and we have a cold ride before us. Well, if you wish it, I will. I — I am very glad," said Tom, smiling with an embarrassed frankness peculiarly his, and which was as plainly a confession of his own imperfections, and an appeal to the kindness of the person he addressed, as if he had drawn one up in simple language and committed it to paper; "I am very glad indeed that you turn out to be the party I expected. I was thinking, but a minute ago, that I could wish him to be like you."

"I am very glad to hear it," returned Martin, shaking hands with him again; "for I assure you, I was thinking there could be no such luck as Mr. Pinch's turning out like *you*."

"No, really!" said Tom, with great pleasure. "Are you serious?"

"Upon my word I am," replied his new acquaintance. "You and I will get on excellently well, I know: which it 's no small relief to me to feel, for to tell you the truth, I am not at all the sort of fellow who could get on with everybody, and that 's the point on which I had the greatest doubts. But they 're quite relieved now. Do me the favour to ring the bell, will you?"

Mr. Pinch rose, and complied with great alacrity — the handle hung just over Martin's head, as he warmed himself — and listened with a smiling face to what his friend went on to say. It was: —

"If you like punch, you 'll allow me to order a glass apiece, as hot as it can be made, that we may usher in our friendship in a becoming manner. To let you into a secret, Mr. Pinch, I never was so much in want of something warm and cheering in my life; but I did n't like to run the chance of being found drinking it, without knowing what kind of person you were; for first impressions, you know, often go a long way, and last a long time."

Mr. Pinch assented, and the punch was ordered. In due course it came, hot and strong. After drinking to each other in the steaming mixture, they became quite confidential.

"I 'm a sort of relation of Pecksniff's, you know," said the young man.

"Indeed!" cried Mr. Pinch.

"Yes. My grandfather is his cousin, so he 's kith and kin to me, somehow, if you can make that out. *I* can't."

"Then Martin is your Christian name?" said Mr. Pinch thoughtfully. "Oh!"

"Of course it is," returned his friend: "I wish it was my surname, for my own is not a very pretty one, and it takes a long time to sign. Chuzzlewit is my name."

"Dear me!" cried Mr. Pinch, with an involuntary start.

"You 're not surprised at my having two names, I suppose?" returned the other, setting his glass to his lips. "Most people have."

"Oh no," said Mr. Pinch, "not at all. Oh dear no! Well!" And then remembering that Mr. Pecksniff had privately cautioned him to say nothing in reference to the old gentleman of the same name who had lodged at the Dragon, but to reserve all mention of that person for him, he had no better means of hiding his confusion than by raising his own glass to his mouth. They looked at each other out of their respective tumblers for a few seconds, and then put them down empty.

"I told them in the stable to be ready for us ten minutes ago," said Mr. Pinch, glancing at the clock again. "Shall we go?"

"If you please," returned the other.

"Would you like to drive?" said Mr. Pinch, his whole face beaming with a consciousness of the splendour of his offer. "You shall, if you wish."

"Why, that depends, Mr. Pinch," said Martin laughing, "upon what sort of horse you have. Because if he 's a bad one, I would rather keep my hands warm by holding them comfortably in my great-coat pockets."

He appeared to think this such a good joke, that Mr. Pinch was quite sure it must be a capital one. Accordingly, he laughed too, and was fully persuaded that he enjoyed it very much. Then he settled his bill, and Mr. Chuzzlewit paid for

GOOD STABLING

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the punch; and having wrapped themselves up, to the extent of their respective means, they went out together to the front door, where Mr. Pecksniff's property stopped the way.

"I won't drive, thank you, Mr. Pinch," said Martin, getting into the sitter's place. "By the bye, there 's a box of mine. Can we manage to take it?"

"Oh, certainly," said Tom. "Put it in, Dick, anywhere!"

It was not precisely of that convenient size which would admit of its being squeezed into any odd corner, but Dick the hostler got it in somehow, and Mr. Chuzzlewit helped him. It was all on Mr. Pinch's side, and Mr. Chuzzlewit said he was very much afraid it would encumber him; to which Tom said, "Not at all;" though it forced him into such an awkward position, that he had much ado to see anything but his own knees. But it is an ill wind that blows nobody any good, and the wisdom of the saying was verified in this instance; for the cold air came from Mr. Pinch's side of the carriage, and by interposing a perfect wall of box and man between it and the new pupil, he shielded that young gentleman effectually, — which was a great comfort.

It was a clear evening, with a bright moon. The whole landscape was silvered by its light and by the hoar-frost, and everything looked exquisitely beautiful. At first the great serenity and peace through which they travelled disposed them both to silence; but in a very short time the punch within them and the healthful air without made them loquacious, and they talked incessantly. When they were half-way home, and stopped to give the horse some water, Martin (who was very generous with his money) ordered another glass of punch, which they drank between them, and which had not the effect of making them less conversational than before. Their principal topic of discourse was naturally Mr. Pecksniff and his family; of whom, and of the great obligations they had heaped upon him, Tom Pinch, with the tears standing in his eyes, drew such a picture as would have inclined any one of common feeling almost to revere them: and of which Mr. Pecksniff had not the slightest foresight or preconceived idea, or he certainly (being very humble) would not have sent Tom Pinch to bring the pupil home.

In this way they went on, and on, and on — in the language of the story-books — until at last the village lights appeared

before them, and the church spire cast a long reflection on the grave-yard grass, — as if it were a dial (alas, the truest in the world!) marking, whatever light shone out of Heaven, the flight of days and weeks and years, by some new shadow on that solemn ground.

"A pretty church!" said Martin, observing that his companion slackened the slack pace of the horse, as they approached.

"Is it not?" cried Tom, with great pride. "There 's the sweetest little organ there you ever heard. I play it for them."

"Indeed?" said Martin. "It is hardly worth the trouble, I should think. What do you get for that, now?"

"Nothing," answered Tom.

"Well," returned his friend, "you *are* a very strange fellow!"

To which remark there succeeded a brief silence.

"When I say nothing," observed Mr. Pinch cheerfully, "I am wrong, and don't say what I mean, because I get a great deal of pleasure from it, and the means of passing some of the happiest hours I know. It led to something else the other day — but you will not care to hear about that, I dare say?"

"Oh yes, I shall. What?"

"It led to my seeing," said Tom, in a lower voice, "one of the loveliest and most beautiful faces you can possibly picture to yourself."

"And yet I am able to picture a beautiful one," said his friend thoughtfully, "or should be, if I have any memory."

"She came," said Tom, laying his hand upon the other's arm, "for the first time, very early in the morning, when it was hardly light, and when I saw her, over my shoulder, standing just within the porch, I turned quite cold, almost believing her to be a spirit. A moment's reflection put the matter of that of course, and fortunately it came to my mind so soon, that I did n't leave off playing."

"Why fortunately?"

"Why? Because she stood there, listening. I had my spectacles on, and saw her through the chinks in the curtains as plainly as I see you, and she was beautiful. After a while she glided off, and I continued to play until she was out of hearing."

"Why did you do that?"

"Don't you see?" responded Tom. "Because she might suppose I had n't seen her, and might return."

"And did she?"

"Certainly she did. Next morning, and next evening too, but always when there were no people about, and always alone. I rose earlier and sat there later, that when she came, she might find the church door open, and the organ playing, and might not be disappointed. She strolled that way for some days, and always stayed to listen. But she is gone now, and of all unlikely things in this wide world, it is perhaps the most improbable that I shall ever look upon her face again."

"You don't know anything more about her?"

"No."

"And you never followed her when she went away?"

"Why should I distress her by doing that?" said Tom Pinch. "Is it likely that she wanted my company? She came to hear the organ, not to see me; and would you have had me scare her from a place she seemed to grow quite fond of? Now, Heaven bless her!" cried Tom, "to have given her but a minute's pleasure every day, I would have gone on playing the organ at those times until I was an old man: quite contented if she sometimes thought of a poor fellow like me, as a part of the music, and more than recompensed if she ever mixed me up with anything she liked as well as she liked that!"

The new pupil was clearly very much amazed by Mr. Pinch's weakness, and would probably have told him so and given him some good advice, but for their opportune arrival at Mr. Pecksniff's door: the front door this time, on account of the occasion being one of ceremony and rejoicing. The same man was in waiting for the horse who had been adjured by Mr. Pinch in the morning not to yield to his rabid desire to start; and after delivering the animal into his charge, and beseeching Mr. Chuzzlewit in a whisper never to reveal a syllable of what he had just told him in the fulness of his heart, Tom led the pupil in, for instant presentation.

Mr. Pecksniff had clearly not expected them for hours to come; for he was surrounded by open books, and was glancing from volume to volume, with a black lead pencil in his mouth, and a pair of compasses in his hand, at a vast number of

mathematical diagrams, of such extraordinary shapes that they looked like designs for fireworks. Neither had Miss Charity expected them, for she was busied, with a capacious wicker basket before her, in making impracticable nightcaps for the poor. Neither had Miss Mercy expected them, for she was sitting upon her stool, tying on the — oh, good gracious! — the petticoat of a large doll that she was dressing for a neighbour's child, — really quite a grown-up doll, which made it more confusing; and had its little bonnet dangling by the ribbon from one of her fair curls, to which she had fastened it, lest it should be lost or sat upon. It would be difficult, if not impossible, to conceive a family so thoroughly taken by surprise as the Pecksniffs were on this occasion.

"Bless my life!" said Mr. Pecksniff, looking up, and gradually exchanging his abstracted face for one of joyful recognition. "Here already! Martin, my dear boy, I am delighted to welcome you to my poor house!"

With this kind greeting, Mr. Pecksniff fairly took him to his arms, and patted him several times upon the back with his right hand the while, as if to express that his feelings during the embrace were too much for utterance.

"But here," he said recovering, "are my daughters, Martin: my two only children, whom (if you ever saw them) you have not beheld—ah, these sad family divisions! — since you were infants together. Nay, my dears, why blush at being detected in your every-day pursuits! We had prepared to give you the reception of a visitor, Martin, in our little room of state," said Mr. Pecksniff smiling, "but I like this better — I like this better!"

Oh blessed star of Innocence, wherever you may be, how did you glitter in your home of ether, when the two Miss Pecksniffs put forth each her lily hand, and gave the same, with mantling cheeks, to Martin! How did you twinkle, as if fluttering with sympathy, when Mercy, reminded of the bonnet in her hair, hid her fair face and turned her head aside, the while her gentle sister plucked it out, and smote her, with a sister's soft reproof, upon her buxom shoulder!

"And how," said Mr. Pecksniff, turning round after the completion of these passages, and taking Mr. Pinch in a fly manner by the elbow, "how has our friend here used Martin?"

"Very well indeed, sir. We are on the best terms, I assure you."

"Old Tom Pinch!" said Mr. Pecksniff, looking on him with affectionate sadness. "Ah! It seems but yesterday that Thomas was a boy, fresh from a scholastic course. Yet years have passed, I think, since Thomas Pinch and I first walked the world together!"

Mr. Pinch could say nothing. He was too much moved. But he pressed his master's hand, and tried to thank him.

"And Thomas Pinch and I," said Mr. Pecksniff, in a deeper voice, "will walk it yet, in mutual faithfulness and friendship! And if it comes to pass that either of us be run over, in any of those busy crossings which divide the streets of life, the other will convey him to the hospital in Hope, and sit beside his bed in Bounty!

"Well, well, well!" he added in a happier tone, as he shook Mr. Pinch's elbow, hard. "No more of this! Martin, my dear friend, that you may be at home within these walls, let me show you how we live and where. Come!"

With that he took up a lighted candle, and, attended by his young relative, prepared to leave the room. At the door, he stopped.

"You 'll bear us company, Tom Pinch?"

Ay, cheerfully, though it had been to death, would Tom have followed him; glad to lay down his life for such a man!

"This," said Mr. Pecksniff, opening the door of an opposite parlour, "is the little room of state I mentioned to you. My girls have pride in it, Martin! This," opening another door, "is the little chamber in which my works (slight things at best) have been concocted. Portrait of myself by Spiller. Bust by Spoker. The latter is considered a good likeness. I seem to recognise something about the left-hand corner of the nose, myself."

Martin thought it was very like, but scarcely intellectual enough. Mr. Pecksniff observed that the same fault had been found with it before. It was remarkable it should have struck his young relation too. He was glad to see he had an eye for art.

"Various books, you observe," said Mr. Pecksniff, waving his hand towards the wall, "connected with our pursuit. I have scribbled myself, but have not yet published. Be careful

how you come up stairs. This," opening another door, "is my chamber. I read here when the family suppose I have retired to rest. Sometimes I injure my health, rather more than I can quite justify to myself, by doing so; but art is long and time is short. Every facility you see for jotting down crude notions, even here."

These latter words were explained by his pointing to a small round table on which were a lamp, divers sheets of paper, a piece of India rubber, and a case of instruments; all put ready, in case an architectural idea should come into Mr. Pecksniff's head in the night; in which event he would instantly leap out of bed, and fix it for ever.

Mr. Pecksniff opened another door on the same floor, and shut it again, all at once, as if it were a Blue Chamber. But before he had well done so, he looked smilingly round, and said, "Why not?"

Martin couldn't say why not, because he didn't know anything at all about it. So Mr. Pecksniff answered himself, by throwing open the door, and saying: —

"My daughters' room. A poor first-floor to us, but a bower to them. Very neat — very airy. Plants, you observe, hyacinths, books again; birds." These birds, by the bye, comprised in all one staggering old sparrow without a tail, which had been borrowed expressly from the kitchen. "Such trifles as girls love are here. Nothing more. Those who seek heartless splendour would seek here in vain."

With that he led them to the floor above.

"This," said Mr. Pecksniff, throwing wide the door of the memorable two-pair front; "is a room where some talent has been developed, I believe. This is a room in which an idea for a steeple occurred to me that I may one day give to the world. We work here, my dear Martin. Some architects have been bred in this room — a few, I think, Mr. Pinch?"

Tom fully assented; and, what is more, fully believed it.

"You see," said Mr. Pecksniff, passing the candle rapidly [illegible] roll to roll of paper, "some traces of our doings here. [illegible]bury Cathedral from the north. From the south. From east. From the west. From the south-east. From the west. A bridge. An alms-house. A jail. A church. [illegible]owder-magazine. A wine-cellar. A portico. A summer-[illegible]se. An ice-house. Plans, elevations, sections, every kind

of thing. And this," he added, having by this time reached another large chamber on the same story, with four little beds in it, "this is your room, of which Mr. Pinch here is the quiet sharer. A southern aspect; a charming prospect; Mr. Pinch's little library, you perceive; everything agreeable and appropriate. If there is any additional comfort you would desire to have here at any time, pray mention it. Even to strangers — far less to you, my dear Martin — there is no restriction on that point."

It was undoubtedly true, and may be stated in corroboration of Mr. Pecksniff, that any pupil had the most liberal permission to mention anything in this way that suggested itself to his fancy. Some young gentlemen had gone on mentioning the very same thing for five years without ever being stopped.

"The domestic assistants," said Mr. Pecksniff, "sleep above; and that is all." After which, and listening complacently as he went to the encomiums passed by his young friend on the arrangements generally, he led the way to the parlour again.

Here a great change had taken place; for festive preparations on a rather extensive scale were already completed, and the two Miss Pecksniffs were awaiting their return with hospitable looks. There were two bottles of currant wine — white and red; a dish of sandwiches (very long and very slim); another of apples; another of captain's biscuits (which are always a moist and jovial sort of viand); a plate of oranges cut up small and gritty with powdered sugar, and a highly geological home-made cake. The magnitude of these preparations quite took away Tom Pinch's breath; for though the new pupils were usually let down softly, as one may say, particularly in the wine department, which had so many stages of declension that sometimes a young gentleman was a whole fortnight in getting to the pump, still this was a banquet; a sort of Lord Mayor's feast in private life; a something to think of and hold on by afterwards.

To this entertainment, which, apart from its own intrinsic merits, had the additional choice quality that it was in strict keeping with the night, being both light and cool, Mr. Pecksniff besought the company to do full justice.

"Martin," he said, "will seat himself between you two, my

dears, and Mr. Pinch will come by me. Let us drink to the new inmate, and may we be happy together! Martin, my dear friend, my love to you! Mr. Pinch, if you spare the bottle we shall quarrel."

And trying (in his regard for the feelings of the rest) to look as if the wine were not acid and didn't make him wink, Mr. Pecksniff did honour to his own toast.

"This," he said, in allusion to the party, not the wine, "is a mingling that repays one for much disappointment and vexation. Let us be merry." Here he took a captain's biscuit. "It is a poor heart that never rejoices; and our hearts are not poor! No!"

With such stimulants to merriment did he beguile the time, and do the honours of the table, while Mr. Pinch, perhaps to assure himself that what he saw and heard was holiday reality and not a charming dream, ate of everything, and [illegible]

[illegible]

At length [illegible]

of that great [illegible]

securing health, riches, and wisdom; the infallibility of which has been for generations verified by the enormous fortunes, constantly amassed by chimney-sweepers and other persons who get up early and go to bed betimes. The young ladies accordingly rose, and having taken leave of Mr. Chuzzlewit with much sweetness, and of their father with much duty, and of Mr. Pinch with much condescension, retired to their bower. Mr. Pecksniff insisted on accompanying his young friend up stairs, for personal superintendence of his comforts; and taking him by the arm, conducted him once more to his bedroom, followed by Mr. Pinch, who bore the light.

"Mr. Pinch," said Pecksniff, seating himself with folded arms on one of the spare beds; "I don't see any snuffers in that candlestick. Will you oblige me by going down, and asking for a pair?"

Mr. Pinch, only too happy to be useful, went off directly.

"You will excuse Thomas Pinch's want of polish, Martin," said Mr. Pecksniff, with a smile of patronage and pity, as soon as he had left the room. "He means well."

"He is a very good fellow, sir."

"Oh, yes," said Mr. Pecksniff. "Yes. Thomas Pinch means well. He is very grateful. I have never regretted having befriended Thomas Pinch."

"I should think you never would, sir."

"No," said Mr. Pecksniff. "No. I hope not. Poor fellow, he is always disposed to do his best; but he is not gifted. You will make him useful to you, Martin, if you please. If Thomas has a fault, it is that he is sometimes a little apt to forget his position. But that is soon checked. Worthy soul! You will find him easy to manage. Good night!"

"Good night, sir."

By this time Mr. Pinch had returned with the snuffers.

"And good night to *you*, Mr. Pinch," said Pecksniff. "And sound sleep to you both. Bless you! Bless you!"

Invoking this benediction on the heads of his young friends with great fervour, he withdrew to his own room; while they, being tired, soon fell asleep. If Martin dreamed at all, some clue to the matter of his visions may possibly be gathered from the after-pages of this history. Those of Thomas Pinch were all of holidays, church organs, and seraphic Pecksniffs. It was some time before Mr. Pecksniff dreamed at all, or even sought

his pillow, as he sat for full two hours before the fire in his own chamber, looking at the coals and thinking deeply. But he, too, slept and dreamed at last. Thus in the quiet hours of the night, one house shuts in as many incoherent and incongruous fancies as a madman's head.

## CHAPTER VI

COMPRISES, AMONG OTHER IMPORTANT MATTERS, PECKSNIFFIAN AND ARCHITECTURAL, AN EXACT RELATION OF THE PROGRESS MADE BY MR. PINCH IN THE CONFIDENCE AND FRIENDSHIP OF THE NEW PUPIL.

It was morning; and the beautiful Aurora, of whom so much hath been written, said, and sung, did, with her rosy fingers, nip and tweak Miss Pecksniff's nose. It was the frolicsome custom of the Goddess, in her intercourse with the fair Cherry, so to do; or in more prosaic phrase, the tip of that feature in the sweet girl's countenance was always very red at breakfast-time. For the most part, indeed, it wore, at that season of the day, a scraped and frosty look, as if it had been rasped; while a similar phenomenon developed itself in her humour, which was then observed to be of a sharp and acid quality, as though an extra lemon (figuratively speaking) had been squeezed into the nectar of her disposition, and had rather damaged its flavour.

This additional pungency on the part of the fair young creature led, on ordinary occasions, to such slight consequences as the copious dilution of Mr. Pinch's tea, or to his coming off uncommonly short in respect of butter, or to other the like results. But on the morning after the Installation Banquet, she suffered him to wander to and fro among the eatables and drinkables, a perfectly free and unchecked man; so utterly to Mr. Pinch's wonder and confusion, that like the wretched captive who recovered his liberty in his old age, he could make but little use of his enlargement, and fell into a strange kind of flutter for want of some kind hand to scrape his bread, and cut him off in the article of sugar with a lump, and pay him those other little attentions to which he was accustomed. There was something almost awful, too, about the self-possession of the new pupil; who "troubled" Mr. Pecksniff for the loaf, and helped himself to a rasher of that gentleman's own

particular and private bacon, with all the coolness in life. He even seemed to think that he was doing quite a regular thing, and to expect that Mr. Pinch would follow his example, since he took occasion to observe of that young man "that he did n't get on;" a speech of so tremendous a character that Tom cast down his eyes involuntarily, and felt as if he himself had committed some horrible deed and heinous breach of Mr. Pecksniff's confidence. Indeed, the agony of having such an undercrest remark addressed to him before the assembled family was breakfast enough in itself, and would, without any other matter of reflection, have settled Mr. Pinch's business and quenched his appetite, for one meal, though he had been never so hungry.

The young ladies, however, and Mr. Pecksniff likewise, remained in the very best of spirits in spite of these severe trials, though with something of a mysterious understanding among themselves. When the meal was nearly over, Mr Pecksniff smilingly explained the cause of their common satisfaction.

"It is not often," he said, "Martin, that my daughters and I desert our quiet home to pursue the giddy round of pleasures that revolves abroad. But we think of doing so to-day."

"Indeed, sir!" cried the new pupil.

"Yes," said Mr. Pecksniff, tapping his left hand with a letter which he held in his right. "I have a summons here to repair to London; on professional business, my dear Martin, strictly on professional business, and I promised my girls, long ago, that whenever that happened again, they should accompany me. We shall go forth to-night by the heavy coach — like the dove of old, my dear Martin — and it will be a week before we again deposit our olive-branches in the passage. When I say olive-branches," observed Mr. Pecksniff in explanation, "I mean our unpretending luggage."

"I hope the young ladies will enjoy their trip," said Martin.

"Oh! that I'm sure we shall!" cried Mercy, clapping her hands. "Good gracious, Cherry, my darling, the idea of London!"

"Violent child!" said Mr. Pecksniff, gazing on her in a despairing way. "And yet there is a melancholy sweetness in these youthful hopes! It is pleasant to know that they never can be realised. I remember thinking once myself, in the

days of my childhood, that pickled onions grew on trees, and that every elephant was born with an impregnable castle on his back. I have not found the fact to be so; far from it; and yet those visions have comforted me under circumstances of trial. Even when I have had the anguish of discovering that I have nourished in my breast an ostrich, and not a human pupil — even in that hour of agony, they have soothed me."

At this dread allusion to John Westlock, Mr. Pinch precipitately choked in his tea; for he had that very morning received a letter from him, as Mr. Pecksniff very well knew.

"You will take care, my dear Martin," said Mr. Pecksniff, resuming his former cheerfulness, "that the house does not run away in our absence. We leave you in charge of everything. There is no mystery; all is free and open. Unlike the young man in the Eastern tale — who is described as a one-eyed almanack, if I am not mistaken, Mr. Pinch?" —

"A one-eyed calender, I think, sir," faltered Tom.

"They are pretty nearly the same thing, I believe," said Mr. Pecksniff, smiling compassionately; "or they used to be in my time. Unlike that young man, my dear Martin, you are forbidden to enter no corner of this house; but are requested to make yourself perfectly at home in every part of it. You will be jovial, my dear Martin, and will kill the fatted calf if you please!"

There was not the least objection, doubtless, to the young man's slaughtering and appropriating to his own use any calf, fat or lean, that he might happen to find upon the premises; but as no such animal chanced at that time to be grazing on Mr. Pecksniff's estate, this request must be considered rather as a polite compliment than a substantial hospitality. It was the finishing ornament of the conversation; for when he had delivered it, Mr. Pecksniff rose, and led the way to that hot-bed of architectural genius, the two-pair front.

"Let me see," he said, searching among the papers, "how you can best employ yourself, Martin, while I am absent. Suppose you were to give me your idea of a monument to a Lord Mayor of London; or a tomb for a sheriff; or your notion of a cow-house to be erected in a nobleman's park. Do you know, now," said Mr. Pecksniff, folding his hands, and looking at his young relation with an air of pensive interest, "that I should very much like to see your notion of a cow-house?"

But Martin by no means appeared to relish this suggestion.

"A pump," said Mr. Pecksniff, "is very chaste practice. I have found that a lamp-post is calculated to refine the mind and give it a classical tendency. An ornamental turnpike has a remarkable effect upon the imagination. What do you say to beginning with an ornamental turnpike?"

"Whatever Mr. Pecksniff pleases," said Martin doubtfully.

"Stay," said that gentleman. "Come! as you're ambitious, and are a very neat draughtsman, you shall — ha, ha! — you shall try your hand on these proposals for a grammar-school: regulating your plan, of course, by the printed particulars. Upon my word, now," said Mr. Pecksniff merrily, "I shall be very curious to see what you make of the grammar-school. Who knows but a young man of your taste might hit upon something, impracticable and unlikely in itself, but which I could put into shape? For it really is, my dear Martin, it really is in the finishing touches alone, that great experience and long study in these matters tell. Ha, ha, ha! Now it really will be," continued Mr. Pecksniff, clapping his young friend on the back in his droll humour, "an amusement to me to see what you make of the grammar-school."

Martin readily undertook this task, and Mr. Pecksniff forthwith proceeded to entrust him with the materials necessary for its execution, dwelling meanwhile on the magical effect of a few finishing touches from the hand of a master, which, indeed, as some people said (and these were the old enemies again!) was unquestionably very surprising, and almost marvellous; as there were cases on record in which the masterly introduction of an additional back window, or a kitchen door, or half a dozen steps, or even a water spout, had made the design of a pupil Mr. Pecksniff's own work, and had brought substantial rewards into that gentleman's pocket. But such is the magic of genius, which changes all it handles into gold!

"When your mind requires to be refreshed, by change of occupation," said Mr. Pecksniff, "Thomas Pinch will instruct you in the art of surveying the back garden, or in ascertaining the dead level of the road between this house and the finger-post, or in any other practical and pleasing pursuit. There are a certain load of loose bricks, and a score or two of old flower-pots, in the back-yard. If you could pile them up, my dear Martin, into any form which would remind me on my return

—say of St. Peter's at Rome, or the Mosque of St. Sophia at Constantinople — it would be at once improving to you and agreeable to my feelings. And now," said Mr. Pecksniff, in conclusion, "to drop, for the present, our professional relations and advert to private matters, I shall be glad to talk with you in my own room, while I pack up my portmanteau."

Martin attended him; and they remained in secret conference together for an hour or more; leaving Tom Pinch alone. When the young man returned, he was very taciturn and dull, in which state he remained all day; so that Tom, after trying him once or twice with indifferent conversation, felt a delicacy in obtruding himself upon his thoughts, and said no more.

He would not have had leisure to say much, had his new friend been ever so loquacious; for first of all Mr. Pecksniff called him down to stand upon the top of his portmanteau and represent ancient statues there, until such time as it would consent to be locked; and then Miss Charity called him to come and cord her trunk; and then Miss Mercy sent for him to come and mend her box; and then he wrote the fullest possible cards for all the luggage; and then he volunteered to carry it all down stairs; and after that to see it safely carried on a couple of barrows to the old finger-post at the end of the lane; and then to mind it till the coach came up. In short, his day's work would have been a pretty heavy one for a porter, but his thorough good-will made nothing of it, and as he sat upon the luggage at last, waiting for the Pecksniffs, escorted by the new pupil, to come down the lane, his heart was light with the hope of having pleased his benefactor.

"I was almost afraid," said Tom, taking a letter from his pocket, and wiping his face, for he was hot with bustling about though it was a cold day, "that I should n't have had time to write it, and that would have been a thousand pities; postage from such a distance being a serious consideration, when one 's not rich. She will be glad to see my hand, poor girl, and to hear that Pecksniff is as kind as ever. I would have asked John Westlock to call and see her, and tell her all about me by word of mouth, but I was afraid he might speak against Pecksniff to her, and make her uneasy. Besides, they are particular people where she is, and it might have rendered her situation uncomfortable if she had had a visit from a young man like John. Poor Ruth!"

Tom Pinch seemed a little disposed to be melancholy
half a minute or so, but he found comfort very soon, and
sued his ruminations thus:—

"I 'm a nice man, I don't think, as John used to say (J
was a kind, merry-hearted fellow: I wish he had liked P
sniff better) to be feeling low, on account of the dist
between us, when I ought to be thinking, instead, of
extraordinary good luck in having ever got here. I must
been born with a silver spoon in my mouth, I am sure, to
ever come across Pecksniff. And here have I fallen again
my usual good luck with the new pupil! Such an aff
generous, free fellow as he is, I never saw. Why, we
companions directly! and he a relation of Pecksniff's too,
a clever, dashing youth who might cut his way through
world as if it were a cheese! Here he comes while the w
are on my lips," said Tom; "walking down the lane as if
lane belonged to him."

In truth, the new pupil, not at all disconcerted by
honour of having Miss Mercy Pecksniff on his arm, or by
affectionate adieux of that young lady, approached as
Pinch spoke, followed by Miss Charity and Mr. Pecks
As the coach appeared at the same moment, Tom lost no
in entreating the gentleman last mentioned, to undertake
delivery of his letter.

"Oh!" said Mr. Pecksniff, glancing at the superscrip
"For your sister, Thomas. Yes, oh yes, it shall be deliv
Mr. Pinch. Make your mind easy upon that score. She
certainly have it, Mr. Pinch."

He made the promise with so much condescension
patronage that Tom felt he had asked a great deal (this
not occurred to his mind before), and thanked him earne
The Miss Pecksniffs, according to a custom they had,
amused beyond description, at the mention of Mr. P's
sister. Oh, the fright! The bare idea of a Miss P
Good heavens!

Tom was greatly pleased to see them so merry, for he
it as a token of their favour and good-humoured re
Therefore he laughed too and rubbed his hands, and w
them a pleasant journey and safe return, and was quite h
Even when the coach had rolled away with the olive-bea
in the boot and the family of doves inside, he stood wavin

hand and bowing; so much gratified by the unusually courteous demeanour of the young ladies that he was quite regardless, for the moment, of Martin Chuzzlewit, who stood leaning thoughtfully against the finger-post, and who after disposing of his fair charge had hardly lifted his eyes from the ground.

The perfect silence which ensued upon the bustle and departure of the coach, together with the sharp air of the wintry afternoon, roused them both at the same time. They turned, as by mutual consent, and moved off, arm in arm.

"How melancholy you are!" said Tom; "what is the matter?"

"Nothing worth speaking of," said Martin. "Very little more than was the matter yesterday, and much more, I hope, than will be the matter to-morrow. I'm out of spirits, Pinch."

"Well," cried Tom, "now do you know I am in capital spirits to-day, and scarcely ever felt more disposed to be good company. It was a very kind thing in your predecessor, John, to write to me, was it not?"

"Why, yes," said Martin carelessly; "I should have thought he would have had enough to do to enjoy himself, without thinking of you, Pinch."

"Just what I felt to be so very likely," Tom rejoined; "but no, he keeps his word, and says, 'My dear Pinch, I often think of you,' and all sorts of kind and considerate things of that description."

"He must be a devilish good-natured fellow," said Martin, somewhat peevishly; "because he can't mean that, you know."

"I don't suppose he can, eh?" said Tom, looking wistfully in his companion's face. "He says so to please me, you think?"

"Why, is it likely," rejoined Martin, with greater earnestness, "that a young man newly escaped from this kennel of a place, and fresh to all the delights of being his own master in London, can have much leisure or inclination to think favourably of anything or anybody he has left behind him here? I put it to you, Pinch, is it natural?"

After a short reflection, Mr. Pinch replied, in a more subdued tone, that to be sure it was unreasonable to expect any such thing, and that he had no doubt Martin knew best.

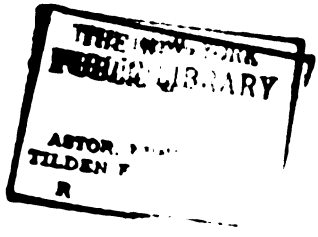
"Of course I know best," Martin observed.

"Yes, I feel that," said Mr. Pinch mildly. "I said so." And when he had made this rejoinder, they fell into a blank silence again, which lasted until they reached home, by which time it was dark.

Now, Miss Charity Pecksniff, in consideration of the inconvenience of carrying them with her in the coach, and the impossibility of preserving them by artificial means until the family's return, had set forth, in a couple of plates, the fragments of yesterday's feast. In virtue of which liberal arrangement, they had the happiness to find awaiting them in the parlour two chaotic heaps of the remains of last night's pleasure, consisting of certain filmy bits of oranges, some mummied sandwiches, various disrupted masses of the geological cake, and several entire captain's biscuits. That choice liquor in which to steep these dainties might not be wanting, the remains of the two bottles of currant wine had been poured together and corked with a curl-paper; so that every material was at hand for making quite a heavy night of it.

Martin Chuzzlewit beheld these roystering preparations with infinite contempt, and, stirring the fire into a blaze to the great destruction of Mr. Pecksniff's coals, sat moodily down before it, in the most comfortable chair he could find. That he might the better squeeze himself into the small corner that was left for him, Mr. Pinch took up his position on Miss Mercy Pecksniff's stool, and, setting his glass down upon the hearth-rug and putting his plate upon his knees, began to enjoy himself.

If Diogenes coming to life again could have rolled himself, tub and all, into Mr. Pecksniff's parlour, and could have seen Tom Pinch as he sat on Mercy Pecksniff's stool with his plate and glass before him, he could not have faced it out, though in his surliest mood, but must have smiled good-temperedly. The perfect and entire satisfaction of Tom, his surpassing appreciation of the husky sandwiches, which crumbled in his mouth like sawdust; the unspeakable relish with which he swallowed the thin wine by drops, and smacked his lips, as though it were so rich and generous that to lose an atom of its fruity flavour were a sin, the look with which he paused sometimes, with his glass in his hand, proposing silent toasts to himself; and the anxious shade that came upon his contented face when, after wandering round the room, exulting in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its uninvaded snugness, his glance encountered the dull brow of his companion, — no cynic in the world, though in his hatred of its men a very griffin, could have withstood these things in Thomas Pinch.

Some men would have slapped him on the back, and pledged him in a bumper of the currant wine, though it had been the sharpest vinegar — ay, and liked its flavour, too; some would have seized him by his honest hand, and thanked him for the lesson that his simple nature taught them. Some would have laughed with, and others would have laughed at him; of which last class was Martin Chuzzlewit, who, unable to restrain himself at last, laughed loud and long.

"That 's right," said Tom, nodding approvingly. "Cheer up! That 's capital!"

At which encouragement, young Martin laughed again; and said, as soon as he had breath and gravity enough: —

"I never saw such a fellow as you are, Pinch."

"Did n't you, though?" said Tom. "Well, it 's very likely you do find me strange, because I have hardly seen anything of the world, and you have seen a good deal, I dare say?"

"Pretty well for my time of life," rejoined Martin, drawing his chair still nearer to the fire, and spreading his feet out on the fender. "Deuce take it, I must talk openly to somebody. I 'll talk openly to you, Pinch."

"Do!" said Tom. "I shall take it as being very friendly of you."

"I 'm not in your way, am I?" inquired Martin, glancing down at Mr. Pinch, who was by this time looking at the fire over his leg.

"Not at all!" cried Tom.

"You must know, then, to make short of a long story," said Martin, beginning with a kind of effort, as if the revelation were not agreeable to him, "that I have been bred up from childhood with great expectations, and have always been taught to believe that I should be, one day, very rich. So I should have been but for certain brief reasons which I am going to tell you, and which have led to my being disinherited."

"By your father?" inquired Mr. Pinch, with open eyes.

"By my grandfather. I have had no parents these many years, — scarcely within my remembrance."

"Neither have I," said Tom, touching the young man's

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hand with his own, and timidly withdrawing it again. "Dear me!"

"Why as to that you know, Pinch," pursued the other, stirring the fire again, and speaking in his rapid, off-hand way; "it's all very right and proper to be fond of parents when we have them, and to bear them in remembrance after they're dead, if you have ever known anything of them. But as I never did know anything about mine personally, you know, why I can't be expected to be very sentimental about 'em. And I am not; that's the truth."

Mr. Pinch was just then looking thoughtfully at the bars. But on his companion pausing in this place, he started, and said, "Oh! of course"—and composed himself to listen again.

"In a word," said Martin, "I have been bred and reared all my life by this grandfather of whom I have just spoken. Now, he has a great many good points; there is no doubt about that; I'll not disguise the fact from you; but he has two very great faults, which are the staple of his bad side. In the first place, he has the most confirmed obstinacy of character you ever met with in any human creature. In the second, he is most abominably selfish."

"Is he, indeed!" cried Tom.

"In these two respects," returned the other, "there never was such a man. I have often heard from those who knew that they have been, time out of mind, the failings of the family; and I believe there's some truth in it. But I can't say of my own knowledge. All I have to do, you know, is to be very thankful that they haven't descended to me, and to be very careful that I don't contract 'em."

"To be sure," said Mr. Pinch. "Very proper."

"Well, sir," resumed Martin, stirring the fire once more, and drawing his chair still closer to it, "his selfishness makes him exacting, you see, and his obstinacy makes him resolute in his exactions. The consequence is that he has always exacted a great deal from me in the way of respect, and submission, and self-denial when his wishes were in question, and so forth. I have borne a great deal from him, because I have been under obligations to him of one can ever be said to be under obligations to one's own grandfather), and because I have been really attached to him, but we have had a great many quarrels, for all that, for I could not accommodate myself

ways very often — not out of the least reference to you understand, but because — " he stammered here, rather at a loss.

Pinch, being about the worst man in the world to help out of a difficulty of this sort, said nothing.

ll! as you understand me," resumed Martin quickly, l n't hunt for the precise expression I want. Now, I the cream of my story, and the occasion of my being I am in love, Pinch."

Pinch looked up into his face with increased interest.

ıy I am in love. I am in love with one of the most l girls the sun ever shone upon. But she is wholly irely dependent upon the pleasure of my grandfather; he were to know that she favoured my passion, she se her home, and everything she possesses in the world. nothing very selfish in *that* love, I think?"

ish!" cried Tom. "You have acted nobly. To love am sure you do, and yet, in consideration for her state dence, not even to disclose — "

ıt are you talking about, Pinch?" said Martin pet- "don't make yourself ridiculous, my good fellow! ı you mean by not disclosing?"

ıg your pardon," answered Tom. "I thought you ıat, or I would n't have said it."

did n't tell her I loved her, where would be the use ıing in love?" said Martin; "unless to keep myself in ıal state of worry and vexation?"

t 's true," Tom answered. "Well! I can guess what when you told her," he added, glancing at Martin's e face.

r, not exactly, Pinch," he rejoined, with a slight because she has some girlish notions about duty and , and all the rest of it, which are rather hard to but in the main you are right. Her heart was mine, "

what I supposed," said Tom. "Quite natural!" and, reat satisfaction, he took a long sip out of his wine-

ıough I had conducted myself from the first with the ircumspection," pursued Martin, "I had not managed so well but that my grandfather, who is full of jealousy

and distrust, suspected me of loving her. He said nothing to her, but straightway attacked me in private, and charged me with designing to corrupt the fidelity to himself (there you observe his selfishness) of a young creature whom he had trained and educated to be his only disinterested and faithful companion when he should have disposed of me in marriage to his heart's content. Upon that, I took fire immediately, and told him that with his good leave I would dispose of myself in marriage, and would rather not be knocked down by him or any other auctioneer to any bidder whomsoever."

Mr. Pinch opened his eyes wider, and looked at the fire harder than he had done yet.

"You may be sure," said Martin, "that this nettled him, and that he began to be the very reverse of complimentary to myself. Interview succeeded interview; words engendered words, as they always do; and the upshot of it was that I was to renounce her or be renounced by him. Now you must bear in mind, Pinch, that I am not only desperately fond of her (for, though she is poor, her beauty and intellect would reflect great credit on anybody, I don't care of what pretensions, who might become her husband), but that a chief ingredient in my composition is a most determined —"

"Obstinacy," suggested Tom in perfect good faith. But the suggestion was not so well received as he had expected for the young man immediately rejoined, with some irritation —

"What a fellow you are, Pinch!"

"I beg your pardon," said Tom; "I thought you wanted a word."

"I didn't want that word," he rejoined. "I told you obstinacy was no part of my character, did I not? I was going to say, if you had given me leave, that a chief ingredient in my composition is a most determined firmness."

"Oh!" cried Tom, screwing up his mouth, and nodding "Yes, yes. I see!"

"And being firm," pursued Martin, "of course I was not going to yield to him, or give way by so much as the thousandth part of an inch."

"No, no," said Tom.

"On the contrary, the more he urged, the more I was determined to oppose him."

"To be sure!" said Tom.

"Very well," rejoined Martin, throwing himself back in his chair, with a careless wave of both hands, as if the subject were quite settled, and nothing more could be said about it — "there is an end of the matter, and here am I!"

Mr. Pinch sat staring at the fire for some minutes with a puzzled look, such as he might have assumed if some uncommonly difficult conundrum had been proposed, which he found it impossible to guess. At length he said: —

"Pecksniff, of course, you had known before?"

"Only by name. No, I had never seen him, for my grandfather kept not only himself but me aloof from all his relations. But our separation took place in a town in the adjoining county. From that place I came to Salisbury, and there I saw Pecksniff's advertisement, which I answered, having always had some natural taste, I believe, in the matters to which it referred, and thinking it might suit me. As soon as I found it to be his, I was doubly bent on coming to him, if possible, on account of his being — "

"Such an excellent man," interposed Tom, rubbing his hands; "so he is. You were quite right."

"Why not so much on that account, if the truth must be spoken," returned Martin, "as because my grandfather has an inveterate dislike to him, and, after the old man's arbitrary treatment of me, I had a natural desire to run as directly counter to all his opinions as I could. Well! as I said before, here I am. My engagement with the young lady I have been telling you about is likely to be a tolerably long one; for neither her prospects nor mine are very bright; and of course I shall not think of marrying until I am well able to do so. It would never do, you know, for me to be plunging myself into poverty and shabbiness and love in one room up three pair of stairs, and all that sort of thing."

"To say nothing of her," remarked Tom Pinch, in a low voice.

"Exactly so," rejoined Martin, rising to warm his back, and leaning against the chimney-piece — "to say nothing of her. At the same time, of course, it 's not very hard upon her to be obliged to yield to the necessity of the case: first, because she loves me very much; and secondly, because I have sacrificed a great deal on her account, and might have done much better, you know."

It was a very long time before Tom said "Certainly;" so long, that he might have taken a nap in the interval, but he did say it at last.

"Now, there is one odd coincidence connected with this love-story," said Martin, "which brings it to an end. You remember what you told me last night as we were coming here, about your pretty visitor in the church?"

"Surely I do," said Tom, rising from his stool and seating himself in the chair from which the other had lately risen, that he might see his face — "undoubtedly."

"That was she."

"I knew what you were going to say," cried Tom, looking fixedly at him, and speaking very softly. "You don't tell me so?"

"That was she," repeated the young man. "After what I have heard from Pecksniff, I have no doubt that she came and went with my grandfather. — Don't you drink too much of that sour wine, or you'll have a fit of some sort, Pinch, I see."

"It is not very wholesome, I am afraid," said Tom, setting down the empty glass he had for some time held. "So that was she, was it?"

Martin nodded assent, and adding, with a restless impatience, that if he had been a few days earlier he would have seen her, and that now she might be, for anything he knew hundreds of miles away, threw himself, after a few turns across the room, into a chair, and chafed like a spoilt child.

Tom Pinch's heart was very tender, and he could not bear to see the most indifferent person in distress, still less one who had awakened an interest in him, and who regarded him (either in fact, or as he supposed) with kindness, and in a spirit of lenient construction. Whatever his own thoughts had been a few moments before — and to judge from his face they must have been pretty serious — he dismissed them instantly, and gave his young friend the best counsel and comfort that occurred to him.

"All will be well in time," said Tom, "I have no doubt and some trial and adversity just now will only serve to make you more attached to each other in better days. I have always read that the truth is so, and I have a feeling within me, which tells me how natural and right it is that it should be. What never ran smooth yet," said Tom, with a smile, which,

despite the homeliness of his face, was pleasanter to see than many a proud beauty's brightest glance — "what never ran smooth yet can hardly be expected to change its character for us; so we must take it as we find it, and fashion it into the very best shape we can by patience and good-humour. I have no power at all — I need n't tell you that — but I have an excellent will; and if I could ever be of use to you, in any way whatever, how very glad I should be!"

"Thank you," said Martin, shaking his hand. "You 're a good fellow, upon my word, and speak very kindly. Of course, you know," he added, after a moment's pause, as he drew his chair towards the fire again, "I should not hesitate to avail myself of your services if you could help me at all; but mercy on us!" — here he rumpled his hair impatiently with his hand, and looked at Tom as if he took it rather ill that he was not somebody else — "you might as well be a toasting-fork or a frying-pan, Pinch, for any help you can render me."

"Except in the inclination," said Tom gently.

"Oh! to be sure. I meant that, of course. If inclination went for anything, I should n't want help. I tell you what you may do, though, if you will — at the present moment, too."

"What is that?" demanded Tom.

"Read to me."

"I shall be delighted," cried Tom, catching up the candle, with enthusiasm. "Excuse my leaving you in the dark a moment, and I 'll fetch a book directly. What will you like? Shakespeare?"

"Ay!" replied his friend, yawning and stretching himself; "he 'll do. I am tired with the bustle of to-day, and the novelty of everything about me; and in such a case, there 's no greater luxury in the world, I think, than being read to sleep. You won't mind my going to sleep, if I can?"

"Not at all!" cried Tom.

"Then begin as soon as you like. You need n't leave off when you see me getting drowsy (unless you feel tired), for it 's pleasant to wake gradually to the sounds again. Did you ever try that?"

"No, I never tried that," said Tom.

"Well! You can, you know, one of these days when we 're both in the right humour. Don't mind leaving me in the dark. Look sharp!"

Mr. Pinch lost no time in moving away; and in a minute or two returned with one of the precious volumes from the shelf beside his bed. Martin had in the mean time made himself as comfortable as circumstances would permit by constructing before the fire a temporary sofa of three chairs with Mercy's stool for a pillow, and lying down at full length upon it.

"Don't be too loud, please," he said to Pinch.

"No, no," said Tom.

"You 're sure you 're not cold?"

"Not at all!" cried Tom.

"I am quite ready, then."

Mr. Pinch accordingly, after turning over the leaves of his book with as much care as if they were living and highly cherished creatures, made his own selection, and began to read. Before he had completed fifty lines, his friend was snoring.

"Poor fellow!" said Tom, softly, as he stretched out his head to peep at him over the backs of the chairs. "He is very young to have so much trouble. How trustful and generous in him to bestow all this confidence in me. And that was she, was it?"

But suddenly remembering their compact, he took up the poem at the place where he had left off, and went on reading, always forgetting to snuff the candle, until its wick looked like a mushroom. He gradually became so much interested that he quite forgot to replenish the fire; and was only reminded of his neglect by Martin Chuzzlewit starting up after the lapse of an hour or so, and crying with a shiver: —

"Why, it 's nearly out, I declare! No wonder I dreamed of being frozen. Do call for some coals. What a fellow you are, Pinch!"

## CHAPTER VII

### IN WHICH MR. CHEVY SLYME ASSERTS THE INDEPENDENCE OF HIS SPIRIT: AND THE BLUE DRAGON LOSES A LIMB.

MARTIN began to work at the grammar-school next morning, with so much vigour and expedition that Mr. Pinch had new reason to do homage to the natural endowments of that young gentleman, and to acknowledge his infinite superiority to himself. The new pupil received Tom's compliments very graciously; and having by this time conceived a real regard for him, in his own peculiar way, predicted that they would always be the very best of friends, and that neither of them, he was certain (but particularly Tom), would ever have reason to regret the day on which they became acquainted. Mr. Pinch was delighted to hear him say this, and felt so much flattered by his kind assurances of friendship and protection that he was at a loss how to express the pleasure they afforded him. And indeed it may be observed of this friendship, such as it was, that it had within it more likely materials of endurance than many a sworn brotherhood that has been rich in promise; for so long as the one party found a pleasure in patronising, and the other in being patronised (which was in the very essence of their respective characters), it was of all possible events among the least probable that the twin demons, Envy and Pride, would ever arise between them. So in very many cases of friendship, or what passes for it, the old axiom is reversed, and like clings to unlike more than to like.

They were both very busy on the afternoon succeeding the family's departure — Martin with the grammar-school, and Tom in balancing certain receipts of rents, and deducting Mr. Pecksniff's commission from the same; in which abstruse employment he was much distracted by a habit his new friend had of whistling aloud, while he was drawing — when they were not a little startled by the unexpected obtrusion into that sanctuary of genius of a human head, which, although a shaggy and

somewhat alarming head in appearance, smiled affably upon them from the doorway, in a manner that was at once waggish, conciliatory, and expressive of approbation.

"I am not industrious myself, gents both," said the head, "but I know how to appreciate that quality in others. I wish I may turn grey and ugly, if it isn't, in my opinion, next to genius, one of the very charmingest qualities of the human mind. Upon my soul, I am grateful to my friend Pecksniff for helping me to the contemplation of such a delicious picture as you present. You remind me of Whittington, afterwards thrice Lord Mayor of London. I give you my unsullied word of honour that you very strongly remind me of that historical character. You are a pair of Whittingtons, gents, without the cat; which is a most agreeable and blessed exception to me, for I am not attached to the feline species. My name is Tigg. how do you do?"

Martin looked to Mr. Pinch for an explanation; and Tom, who had never in his life set eyes on Mr. Tigg before, looked to that gentleman himself.

"Chevy Slyme!" said Mr. Tigg interrogatively, and kissing his left hand in token of friendship. "You will understand me when I say that I am the accredited agent of Chevy Slyme — that I am the ambassador from the court of Chivy! Ha, ha!"

"Heyday!" exclaimed Martin, starting at the mention of a name he knew. "Pray what does he want with me?"

"If your name is Pinch —" Mr. Tigg began.

"It is not," said Martin checking himself. "That is Mr Pinch."

"If that is Mr Pinch," cried Tigg, kissing his hand again, and beginning to follow his head into the room, "he will permit me to say that I greatly esteem and respect his character, which has been most highly commended to me by my friend Pecksniff, and that I deeply appreciate his talent for the organ, notwithstanding that I do not, if I may use the expression, grind, myself. If this is Mr. Pinch, I will venture to express a hope that I see him well, and that he is suffering no inconvenience from the easterly wind?"

"Thank you," said Tom. "I am very well."

"That is a comfort," Mr Tigg rejoined. "Then," he added, shielding his lips with the palm of his hand, and apply-

ing them close to Mr. Pinch's ear, "I have come for the letter."

"For the letter," said Tom aloud. "What letter?"

"The letter," whispered Tigg, in the same cautious manner as before, "which my friend Pecksniff addressed to Chevy Slyme, Esquire, and left with you."

"He did n't leave any letter with me," said Tom.

"Hush!" cried the other; "it 's all the same thing, though not so delicately done by my friend Pecksniff as I could have wished — the money."

"The money!" cried Tom, quite scared.

"Exactly so," said Mr. Tigg. With which he rapped Tom twice or thrice upon the breast and nodded several times, as though he would say that he saw they understood each other; that it was unnecessary to mention the circumstance before a third person; and that he would take it as a particular favour if Tom would slip the amount into his hand as quietly as possible.

Mr. Pinch, however, was so very much astounded by this (to him) inexplicable deportment that he at once openly declared there must be some mistake, and that he had been intrusted with no commission whatever having any reference to Mr. Tigg or to his friend either. Mr. Tigg received this declaration with a grave request that Mr. Pinch would have the goodness to make it again; and on Tom's repeating it in a still more emphatic and unmistakable manner, checked it off, sentence for sentence, by nodding his head solemnly at the end of each. When it had come to a close for the second time, Mr. Tigg sat himself down in a chair and addressed the young men as follows: —

"Then I tell you what it is, gents both. There is at this present moment, in this very place, a perfect constellation of talent and genius, who is involved, through what I cannot but designate as the culpable negligence of my friend Pecksniff, in a situation as tremendous, perhaps, as the social intercourse of the nineteenth century will readily admit of. There is actually at this instant, at the Blue Dragon, in this village, — an alehouse, observe; a common, paltry, low-minded, clod-hopping, pipe-smoking alehouse, — an individual, of whom it may be said, in the language of the Poet, that nobody but himself can in any way come up to him; who is detained there

for his bill. Ha, ha! For his bill! I repeat it — for his bill. Now," said Mr. Tigg, "we have heard of Fox's Book of Martyrs, I believe, and we have heard of the Court of Requests, and the Star Chamber; but I fear the contradiction of no man alive or dead, when I assert that my friend Chevy Slyme being held in pawn for a bill beats any amount of cock-fighting with which I am acquainted."

Martin and Mr. Pinch looked, first at each other, and afterwards at Mr. Tigg, who with his arms folded on his breast surveyed them, half in despondency and half in bitterness.

"Don't mistake me, gents both," he said, stretching forth his right hand. "If it had been for anything but a bill, I could have borne it, and could still have looked upon mankind with some feeling of respect; but when such a man as my friend Slyme is detained for a score — a thing in itself essentially mean; a low performance on a slate, or possibly chalked upon the back of a door — I do feel that there is a screw of such magnitude loose somewhere that the whole framework of society is shaken, and the very first principles of things can no longer be trusted. In short, gents both," said Mr. Tigg, with a passionate flourish of his hands and head, "when a man like Slyme is detained for such a thing as a bill, I reject the superstitions of ages, and believe nothing. I don't even believe that I *don't* believe, curse me if I do!"

"I am very sorry, I am sure," said Tom after a pause, "but Mr. Pecksniff said nothing to me about it, and I couldn't act without his instructions. Wouldn't it be better, sir, if you were to go to — to wherever you came from — yourself, and remit the money to your friend?"

"How can that be done, when I am detained also?" said Mr. Tigg, "and when moreover, owing to the astounding, and I must add, guilty negligence of my friend Pecksniff, I have no money for coach-hire?"

Tom thought of reminding the gentleman who, no doubt, in his agitation had forgotten it, that there was a post office in the land, and that possibly if he wrote to some friend or agent for a remittance it might not be lost upon the road, or at all events that the chance, however desperate, was worth trusting to. But as his good-nature presently suggested to him certain reasons for abstaining from this hint, he paused again, and then asked, —

"Did you say, sir, that you were detained also?"

"Come here," said Mr. Tigg rising. "You have no objection to my opening this window for a moment?"

"Certainly not," said Tom.

"Very good," said Mr. Tigg, lifting the sash. "You see a fellow down there in a red neckcloth and no waistcoat?"

"Of course I do," cried Tom. "That 's Mark Tapley."

"Mark Tapley, is it?" said the gentleman. "Then Mark Tapley had not only the great politeness to follow me to this house, but is waiting now, to see me home again. And for that act of attention, sir," added Mr. Tigg, stroking his moustache, "I can tell you that Mark Tapley had better in his infancy have been fed to suffocation by Mrs. Tapley than preserved to this time."

Mr. Pinch was not so dismayed by this terrible threat but that he had voice enough to call to Mark to come in, and up stairs; a summons which he so speedily obeyed that, almost as soon as Tom and Mr. Tigg had drawn in their heads and closed the window again, he, the denounced, appeared before them.

"Come here, Mark!" said Mr. Pinch. "Good gracious me, what 's the matter between Mrs. Lupin and this gentleman?"

"What gentleman, sir?" said Mark. "I don't see no gentleman here, sir, excepting you and the new gentleman," to whom he made a rough kind of bow — "and there 's nothing wrong between Mrs. Lupin and either of you, Mr. Pinch, I am sure."

"Nonsense, Mark!" cried Tom. "You see Mr. —"

"Tigg," interposed that gentleman. "Wait a bit. I shall crush him soon. All in good time!"

"Oh, *him!*" rejoined Mark, with an air of careless defiance. "Yes, I see *him*. I could see him a little better, if he 'd shave himself, and get his hair cut."

Mr. Tigg shook his head with a ferocious look, and smote himself once upon the breast.

"It 's no use," said Mark. "If you knock ever so much in that quarter, you 'll get no answer. I know better. There 's nothing there but padding, and a greasy sort it is."

"Nay, Mark," urged Mr. Pinch, interposing to prevent hostilities; "tell me what I ask you. You 're not out of temper, I hope?"

"Out of temper, sir!" cried Mark, with a grin; "why no, sir. There's a little credit — not much — in being jolly, when such fellows as him is a going about like roaring bona. if there *is* any breed of lions, at least, as is all roar and mane. What is there between him and Mrs. Lupin, sir? Why, there's a score between him and Mrs. Lupin. And I think Mrs. Lupin lets him and his friend off very easy in not charging 'em double prices for being a disgrace to the Dragon. That's my opinion. I wouldn't have any such Peter the Wild Boy as him in my house, sir, not if I was paid race-week prices for it. He's enough to turn the very beer in the casks sour, with his looks: he is! So he would, if it had judgment enough."

"You're not answering my question, you know, Mark," observed Mr. Pinch.

"Well, sir," said Mark, "I don't know as there's much to answer further than that. Him and his friend goes and stops at the Moon and Stars till they've run a bill there; and then comes and stops with us and does the same. The running of bills is common enough, Mr. Pinch; it ain't that as we object to; it's the ways of this chap. Nothing's good enough for him; all the women is dying for him, he thinks, and is overpaid if he winks at 'em; and all the men was made to be ordered about by him. This not being aggravation enough, he says this morning to me, in his usual captivating way, 'We're going to-night, my man.' 'Are you, sir?' says I. 'Perhaps you'd like the bill got ready, sir?' 'Oh no, my man,' he says; 'you need n't mind that. I'll give Pecksniff orders to see to that.' In reply to which, the Dragon makes answer, 'Thankee, sir, you're very kind to honour us so far, but as we don't know any particular good of you, and you don't travel with luggage, and Mr. Pecksniff ain't at home (which perhaps you may n't happen to be aware of, sir), we should prefer something more satisfactory;' and that's where the matter stands. And I ask," said Mr. Tapley pointing, in conclusion, to Mr. Tigg, with his hat, "any lady or gentleman, possessing ordinary strength of mind, to say, whether he's a disagreeable-looking chap or not!"

"Let me inquire," said Martin, interposing between this candid speech and the delivery of some blighting anathema by Mr. Tigg, "what the amount of this debt may be."

"In point of money, sir, very little," answered Mark. "Only just turned of three pounds. But it ain't that; it's the—"

"Yes, yes, you told us so before," said Martin. "Pinch, a word with you."

"What is it?" asked Tom, retiring with him to a corner of the room.

"Why, simply—I am ashamed to say—that this Mr. Slyme is a relation of mine, of whom I never heard anything pleasant; and that I don't want him here just now, and think he would be cheaply got rid of, perhaps, for three or four pounds. You haven't enough money to pay this bill, I suppose?"

Tom shook his head to an extent that left no doubt of his entire sincerity.

"That's unfortunate, for I am poor too; and in case you had had it, I'd have borrowed it of you. But if we told this landlady we would see her paid, I suppose that would answer the same purpose?"

"Oh dear, yes!" said Tom. "She knows me, bless you!"

"Then, let us go down at once and tell her so; for the sooner we are rid of their company the better. As you have conducted the conversation with this gentleman hitherto, perhaps you'll tell him what we purpose doing; will you?"

Mr. Pinch complying, at once imparted the intelligence to Mr. Tigg, who shook him warmly by the hand in return, assuring him that his faith in anything and everything was again restored. It was not so much, he said, for the temporary relief of this assistance that he prized it, as for its vindication of the high principle that Nature's Nobs felt with Nature's Nobs, and that true greatness of soul sympathised with true greatness of soul all the world over. It proved to him, he said, that like him they admired genius, even when it was coupled with the alloy occasionally visible in the metal of his friend Slyme; and on behalf of that friend he thanked them, as warmly and heartily as if the cause were his own. Being cut short in these speeches by a general move towards the stairs, he took possession at the street-door of the lapel of Mr. Pinch's coat, as a security against further interruption; and entertained that gentleman with some highly improving dis-

course until they reached the Dragon, whither they were closely followed by Mark and the new pupil.

The rosy hostess scarcely needed Mr. Pinch's word as a preliminary to the release of her two visitors, of whom she was glad to be rid on any terms; indeed, their brief detention had originated mainly with Mr. Tapley, who entertained a constitutional dislike to gentlemen out-at-elbows who flourished on false pretences; and had conceived a particular aversion to Mr. Tigg and his friend, as choice specimens of the species. The business in hand thus easily settled, Mr. Pinch and Martin would have withdrawn immediately, but for the urgent entreaties of Mr. Tigg that they would allow him the honour of presenting them to his friend Slyme, which were so very difficult of resistance that, yielding partly to these persuasions and partly to their own curiosity, they suffered themselves to be ushered into the presence of that distinguished gentleman.

He was brooding over the remains of yesterday's decanter of brandy, and was engaged in the thoughtful occupation of making a chain of rings on the top of the table with the wet foot of his drinking-glass. Wretched and forlorn as he looked, Mr Slyme had once been, in his way, the choicest of swaggerers — putting forth his pretensions boldly, as a man of infinite taste and most undoubted promise. The stock-in-trade requisite to set up an amateur in this department of business is very slight and easily got together, a trick of the nose and a curl of the lip sufficient to compound a tolerable sneer being ample provision for any exigency. But in an evil hour this offshoot of the Chuzzlewit trunk, being lazy, and ill qualified for any regular pursuit, and having dissipated such means as he ever possessed, had formally established himself as a professor of Taste for a livelihood, and finding, too late, that something more than his old amount of qualifications was necessary to sustain him in this calling, had quickly fallen to his present level, where he retained nothing of his old self but his boastfulness and his bile, and seemed to have no existence separate or apart from his friend Tigg. And now so abject and so pitiful was he — at once so maudlin, insolent, beggarly, and proud — that even his friend and parasite, standing erect beside him, swelled into a Man by contrast.

"Chuz," said Mr. Tigg, clapping him on the back, "my friend Pecksniff not being at home, I have arranged our trifling

piece of business with Mr. Pinch and friend. Mr. Pinch and friend, Mr. Chevy Slyme — Chiv, Mr. Pinch and friend!"

"These are agreeable circumstances in which to be introduced to strangers," said Chevy Slyme, turning his bloodshot eyes towards Tom Pinch. "I am the most miserable man in the world, I believe!"

Tom begged he would n't mention it; and finding him in this condition, retired, after an awkward pause, followed by Martin. But Mr. Tigg so urgently conjured them, by coughs and signs, to remain in the shadow of the door, that they stopped there.

"I swear," cried Mr. Slyme, giving the table an imbecile blow with his fist, and then feebly leaning his head upon his hand, while some drunken drops oozed from his eyes, "that I am the wretchedest creature on record. Society is in a conspiracy against me. I 'm the most literary man alive. I 'm full of scholarship; I 'm full of genius; I 'm full of information; I 'm full of novel views on every subject; yet look at my condition! I 'm at this moment obliged to two strangers for a tavern bill!"

Mr. Tigg replenished his friend's glass, pressed it into his hand, and nodded an intimation to the visitors that they would see him in a better aspect immediately.

"Obliged to two strangers for a tavern bill, eh?" repeated Mr. Slyme, after a sulky application to his glass. "Very pretty! And crowds of impostors, the while, becoming famous: men who are no more on a level with me than — Tigg, I take you to witness that I am the most persecuted hound on the face of the earth."

With a whine, not unlike the cry of the animal he named in its lowest state of humiliation, he raised his glass to his mouth again. He found some encouragement in it; for when he set it down, he laughed scornfully. Upon that Mr. Tigg gesticulated to the visitors once more, and with great expression, implying that now the time was come when they would see Chiv in his greatness.

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Mr. Slyme. "Obliged to two strangers for a tavern bill! Yet I think I 've a rich uncle, Tigg, who could buy up the uncles of fifty strangers? Have I, or have I not? I come of a good family, I believe? Do I, or do I not? I 'm not a man of common capacity or accomplishments, I think. Am I, or am I not?"

"You are the American aloe of the human race, my dear Chiv," said Mr. Tigg, "which only blooms once in a hundred years!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Mr. Slyme again. "Obliged to two strangers for a tavern bill! I! Obliged to two architect's apprentices — fellows who measure earth with iron chains, and build houses like bricklayers. Give me the names of those two apprentices. How dare they oblige me!"

Mr. Tigg was quite lost in admiration of this noble trait in his friend's character; as he made known to Mr. Pinch in a neat little ballet of action, spontaneously invented for the purpose.

"I 'll let 'em know, and I 'll let all men know," cried Chevy Slyme, "that I 'm none of the mean, grovelling, tame characters they meet with commonly. I have an independent spirit. I have a heart that swells in my bosom. I have a soul that rises superior to base considerations."

"Oh, Chiv, Chiv," murmured Mr. Tigg, "you have a nobly independent nature, Chiv!"

"You go and do your duty, sir," said Mr. Slyme angrily, "and borrow money for travelling expenses, and wherever you borrow it of, let 'em know that I possess a haughty spirit and a proud spirit, and have infernally finely-touched chords in my nature, which won't brook patronage. Do you hear? Tell 'em I hate 'em, and that that 's the way I preserve my self-respect, and tell 'em that no man ever respected himself more than I do!"

He might have added that he hated two sorts of men — all those who did him favours, and all those who were better off than himself, as in either case their position was an insult to a man of his stupendous merits. But he did not, for with the apt closing words above recited, Mr Slyme — of too haughty a stomach to work, to beg, to borrow, or to steal yet mean enough to be worked or borrowed, begged or stolen for, by any cats-paw that would serve his turn, too insolent to lick the hand that fed him in his need, yet cur enough to bite and tear it in the dark — with these apt closing words, Mr Slyme fell forward with his head upon the table, and so declined into a sudden sleep.

"Was there ever," cried Mr Tigg, joining the young men at the door, and shutting it carefully behind him, "such an independent spirit as is possessed by that extraordinary crea-

ture? Was there ever such a Roman as our friend Chiv? Was there ever a man of such a purely classical turn of thought, and of such a toga-like simplicity of nature? Was there ever a man with such a flow of eloquence? Might he not, gents both, I ask, have sat upon a tripod in the ancient times and prophesied to a perfectly unlimited extent, if previously supplied with gin-and-water at the public cost?"

Mr. Pinch was about to contest this latter position with his usual mildness, when, observing that his companion had already gone downstairs, he prepared to follow him.

"You are not going, Mr. Pinch?" said Tigg.

"Thank you," answered Tom. "Yes. Don't come down."

"Do you know that I should like one little word in private with you, Mr. Pinch?" said Tigg, following him. "One minute of your company in the skittle-ground would very much relieve my mind. Might I beseech that favour?"

"Oh, certainly," replied Tom, "if you really wish it." So he accompanied Mr. Tigg to the retreat in question, on arriving at which place that gentleman took from his hat what seemed to be the fossil remains of an antediluvian pocket-handkerchief, and wiped his eyes therewith.

"You have not beheld me this day," said Mr. Tigg, "in a favourable light."

"Don't mention that," said Tom, "I beg."

"But you have *not*," cried Tigg. "I must persist in that opinion. If you could have seen me, Mr. Pinch, at the head of my regiment on the coast of Africa, charging in the form of a hollow square with the women and children and the regimental plate-chest in the centre, you would not have known me for the same man. You would have respected me, sir."

Tom had certain ideas of his own upon the subject of glory; and consequently he was not quite so much excited by this picture as Mr. Tigg could have desired.

"But no matter!" said that gentleman. "The school-boy writing home to his parents and describing the milk-and-water, said 'This is indeed weakness.' I repeat that assertion in reference to myself at the present moment, and I ask your pardon. Sir, you have seen my friend Slyme?"

"No doubt," said Mr. Pinch.

"Sir, you have been impressed by my friend Slyme?"

"Not very pleasantly, I must say," answered Tom, after a little hesitation.

"I am grieved but not surprised," cried Mr. Tigg, detaining him by both lapels, "to hear that you have come to that conclusion; for it is my own. But, Mr. Pinch, though I am a rough and thoughtless man, I can honour Mind. I honour Mind in following my friend. To you of all men, Mr. Pinch, I have a right to make appeal on Mind's behalf, when it has not the art to push its fortune in the world. And so, sir—not for myself, who have no claim upon you, but for my crushed, my sensitive and independent friend, who has—I ask the loan of three half-crowns. I ask you for the loan of three half-crowns, distinctly, and without a blush. I ask it almost as a right. And when I add that they will be returned by post, this week, I feel that you will blame me for that sordid stipulation."

Mr. Pinch took from his pocket an old-fashioned red-leather purse with a steel-clasp, which had probably once belonged to his deceased grandmother. It held one half-sovereign and no more. All Tom's worldly wealth until next quarter-day.

"Stay!" cried Mr. Tigg, who had watched this proceeding keenly. "I was just about to say, that for the convenience of posting your letter make it gold. Thank you. A general direction, I suppose, to Mr. Pinch, at Mr. Pecksniff's—will that find you?"

"That 'll find me," said Tom. "You had better put Esquire to Mr. Pecksniff's name, if you please. Direct to me, you know, at Seth Pecksniff's, Esquire."

"At Seth Pecksniff's, Esquire," repeated Mr. Tigg, taking an exact note of it, with a stump of pencil. "We said this week, I believe?"

"Yes—or Monday will do," observed Tom.

"No, no, I beg your pardon. Monday will *not* do," said Mr. Tigg. "If we stipulated for this week, Saturday is the latest day. Did we stipulate for this week?"

"Since you are so particular about it," said Tom, "I think we did."

Mr. Tigg added this condition to his memorandum; read the entry over to himself with a severe frown, and that the transaction might be the more correct and businesslike, appended his initials to the whole. That done, he assured Mr. Pinch that everything was now perfectly regular; and, after squeezing his hand with great fervour, departed.

Tom entertained enough suspicion that Martin might possibly turn this interview into a jest, to render him desirous to avoid the company of that young gentleman for the present. With this view he took a few turns up and down the skittle-ground, and did not re-enter the house until Mr. Tigg and his friend had quitted it, and the new pupil and Mark were watching their departure from one of the windows.

"I was just a saying, sir, that if one could live by it," observed Mark, pointing after their late guests, "that would be the sort of service for me. Waiting on such individuals as them would be better than grave-digging, sir."

"And staying here would be better than either, Mark," replied Tom. "So take my advice, and continue to swim easily in smooth water."

"It 's too late to take it now, sir," said Mark. "I have broke it to her, sir. I am off to-morrow morning."

"Off!" cried Mr. Pinch, "where to?"

"I shall go up to London, sir."

"What to be?" asked Mr. Pinch.

"Well! I don't know yet, sir. Nothing turned up that day I opened my mind to you, as was at all likely to suit me. All them trades I thought of was a deal too jolly; there was no credit at all to be got in any of 'em. I must look for a private service, I suppose, sir. I might be brought out strong, perhaps, in a serious family, Mr. Pinch."

"Perhaps you might come out rather too strong for a serious family's taste, Mark."

"That 's possible, sir. If I could get into a wicked family, I might do myself justice: but the difficulty is to make sure of one's ground, because a young man can't very well advertise that he wants a place, and wages ain't so much an object as a wicked sitivation; can he, sir?"

"Why, no," said Mr. Pinch, "I don't think he can."

"An envious family," pursued Mark, with a thoughtful face; "or a quarrelsome family, or a malicious family, or even a good out-and-out mean family, would open a field of action as I might do something in. The man as would have suited me of all other men was that old gentleman as was took ill here, for he really was a trying customer. Howsever, I must wait and see what turns up, sir; and hope for the worst."

"You are determined to go then?" said Mr. Pinch.

is gone already, sir, by the wagon, and I 'm
k on to-morrow morning, and get a lift by the day
it overtakes me. So I wish you good-by, Mr.
you too, sir, — and all good luck and happiness!"
h returned his greeting laughingly, and walked
-arm; Mr. Pinch imparting to his new friend, a
uch further particulars of Mark Tapley's whimsical
as the reader is already acquainted with.
mean time Mark, having a shrewd notion that his
s in very low spirits, and that he could not exactly
the consequences of any lengthened *tête-à-tête* in
pt himself obstinately out of her way all the after-
vening. In this piece of generalship he was very
sted by the great influx of company into the tap
the news of his intention having gone abroad, there
ect throng there all the evening, and much drinking
ou healths and clinking of mugs. At length the house was
closed for the night; and there being now no help for it, Mark
put the best face he could upon the matter, and walked dog-
gedly to the bar-door.

"If I look at her," said Mark to himself, "I 'm done. I feel that I 'm going fast."

"You have come at last," said Mrs. Lupin.

Ay, Mark said, there he was.

"And you are determined to leave us, Mark," cried Mrs. Lupin.

"Why, yes; I am," said Mark; keeping his eyes hard upon the floor.

"I thought," pursued the landlady, with a most engaging hesitation, "that you had been — fond — of the Dragon!"

"So I am," said Mark.

"Then," pursued the hostess — and it really was not an unnatural inquiry — "why do you desert it!"

But as he gave no manner of answer to this question, not even on its being repeated, Mrs. Lupin put his money into his hand, and asked him — not unkindly, quite the contrary — what he would take.

It is proverbial that there are certain things which flesh and blood cannot bear. Such a question as this, propounded in such a manner, at such a time, and by such a person, proved (at least, as far as Mark's flesh and blood were concerned) to

be one of them. He looked up in spite of himself directly; and having once looked up, there was no looking down again; for of all the tight, plump, buxom, bright-eyed, dimple-faced landladies that ever shone on earth, there stood before him then, bodily in that bar, the very pink and pine-apple.

"Why, I tell you what," said Mark, throwing off all his constraint in an instant, and seizing the hostess round the waist — at which she was not at all alarmed, for she knew what a good young man he was — "if I took what I liked most, I should take you. If I only thought of what was best for me, I should take you. If I took what nineteen young fellows in twenty would be glad to take, and would take at any price, I should take you. Yes, I should," cried Mr. Tapley, shaking his head, expressively enough, and looking (in a momentary state of forgetfulness) rather hard at the hostess's ripe lips. "And no man would n't wonder if I did!"

Mrs. Lupin said he amazed her. She was astonished how he could say such things. She had never thought it of him.

"Why, I never thought it of myself till now!" said Mark, raising his eyebrows with a look of the merriest possible surprise. "I always expected we should part, and never have no explanation; I meant to do it when I come in here just now; but there 's something about you as makes a man sensible. Then let us have a word or two together: letting it be understood beforehand" — he added this in a grave tone, to prevent the possibility of any mistake — "that I 'm not a going to make no love, you know."

There was for just one second a shade — though not by any means a dark one — on the landlady's open brow. But it passed off instantly, in a laugh that came from her very heart.

"Oh, very good!" she said; "if there is to be no love-making, you had better take your arm away."

"Lord, why should I?" cried Mark. "It 's quite innocent."

"Of course it 's innocent," returned the hostess, "or I should n't allow it."

"Very well!" said Mark. "Then let it be."

There was so much reason in this, that the landlady laughed again, suffered it to remain, and bade him say what he had to say, and be quick about it. But he was an impudent fellow, she added.

"Ha, ha! I almost think I am!" cried Mark, "tho
never thought so before. Why, I can say anything to-n
"Say what you 're going to say, if you please, and be q
returned the landlady, "for I want to get to bed."
"Why, then, my dear good soul," said Mark, "and a
woman than you are never drawed breath — let me s
man as says she did — what would be the likely conse
of us two being —"
"Oh nonsense!" cried Mrs. Lupin. "Don't talk abo
any more."
"No, no, but it ain't nonsense," said Mark; "and I
you 'd attend. What would be the likely consequence
two being married? If I can't be content and comforta
this here lively Dragon now, is it to be looked for as I
be then? By no means. Very good. Then you, eve
your good-humour, would be always on the fret and
always uncomfortable in your own mind, always a thinki
you was getting too old for my taste, always a picturing
yourself as being chained up to the Dragon door, and w
to break away. I don't know that it would be so," said
"but I don't know that it might n't be. I am a rovin
of chap, I know. I 'm fond of change. I 'm always a
ing that with my good health and spirits, it would be
creditable in me to be jolly where there 's things a go
to make one dismal. It may be a mistake of mine, yo
but nothing short of trying how it acts will set it
There ain't it best that I should go; particular when yo
way has helped me all this, and we can part a
friends as we since first I entered thi
noble Dr Mr Tapley in conclusion,
my with, to the day of my death
time, but sh
them heart
looking into h
her; "and
to-night than
Mark, "that 's no
looking at her in
what a lot o
drive distracted!"

SALISBURY

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She laughed again at this compliment; and once more shaking him by both hands, and bidding him, if he should ever want a friend, to remember her, turned gaily from the little bar and up the Dragon staircase.

"Humming a tune as she goes," said Mark listening, "in case I should think she 's at all put out, and should be made down-hearted. Come, here 's some credit in being jolly, at last!"

With that piece of comfort, very ruefully uttered, he went, in anything but a jolly manner, to bed.

He rose early next morning, and was afoot soon after sunrise. But it was of no use; the whole place was up to see Mark Tapley off — the boys, the dogs, the children, the old men, the busy people and the idlers, there they were, all calling out "Good-by, Mark," after their own manner, and all sorry he was going. Somehow he had a kind of sense that his old mistress was peeping from her chamber-window, but he could n't make up his mind to look back.

"Good-by one, good-by all!" cried Mark, waving his hat on the top of his walking-stick, as he strode at a quick pace up the little street. "Hearty chaps them wheelwrights — hurrah! Here 's the butcher's dog a coming out of the garden — down, old fellow! And Mr. Pinch a going to his organ — good-by, sir! And the terrier-bitch from over the way — hie, then, lass! And children enough to hand down human nature to the latest posterity — good-by, boys and girls! There 's some credit in it now. I 'm a coming out strong at last. These are the circumstances that would try a ordinary mind; but I 'm uncommon jolly, not quite as jolly as I could wish to be, but very near. Good-by! good-by!"

## CHAPTER VIII

IES MR. PECKSNIFF AND HIS CHARMING DAUGHTERS TO
Y OF LONDON; AND RELATES WHAT FELL OUT, UPON
WAY THITHER.

Mr. Pecksniff and the two young ladies got into the
h at the end of the lane, they found it empty, which
eat comfort; particularly as the outside was quite full
passengers looked very frosty. For as Mr. Pecksniff
bserved — when he and his daughters had burrowed
their feet deep in the straw, wrapped themselves to the chin, and
pulled up both windows — it is always satisfactory to feel, in
keen weather, that many other people are not as warm as you
are. And this, he said, was quite natural, and a very beautiful arrangement; not confined to coaches, but extending itself into many social ramifications. "For" (he observed), "if every one were warm and well-fed, we should lose the satisfaction of admiring the fortitude with which certain conditions of men bear cold and hunger. And if we were no better off than anybody else, what would become of our sense of gratitude, which," said Mr. Pecksniff with tears in his eyes, as he shook his fist at a beggar who wanted to get up behind, "is one of the holiest feelings of our common nature."

His children heard with becoming reverence these moral precepts from the lips of their father, and signified their acquiescence in the same by smiles. That he might the better feed and cherish that sacred flame of gratitude in his breast, Mr. Pecksniff remarked that he would trouble his eldest daughter, even in this early stage of their journey, for the brandy-bottle. And from the narrow neck of that stone vessel he imbibed a copious refreshment.

"What are we!" said Mr. Pecksniff, "but coaches! Some of us are slow coaches — "

"Goodness, Pa!" cried Charity.

"Some of us, I say," resumed her parent with increased

emphasis, "are slow coaches; some of us are fast coaches. Our passions are the horses; and rampant animals too! —"

"Really Pa!" cried both the daughters at once. "How very unpleasant."

"And rampant animals too!" repeated Mr. Pecksniff, with so much determination that he may be said to have exhibited, at the moment, a sort of moral rampancy himself; "and Virtue is the drag. We start from The Mother's Arms, and we run to The Dust Shovel."

When he had said this, Mr. Pecksniff, being exhausted, took some further refreshment. When he had done that, he corked the bottle tight, with the air of a man who had effectually corked the subject also; and went to sleep for three stages.

The tendency of mankind when it falls asleep in coaches is to wake up cross; to find its legs in its way, and its corns an aggravation. Mr. Pecksniff not being exempt from the common lot of humanity, found himself, at the end of his nap, so decidedly the victim of these infirmities that he had an irresistible inclination to visit them upon his daughters; which he had already begun to do in the shape of divers random kicks, and other unexpected motions of his shoes, when the coach stopped, and after a short delay, the door was opened.

"Now mind," said a thin sharp voice in the dark; "I and my son go inside, because the roof is full, but you agree only to charge us outside prices. It 's quite understood that we won't pay more. Is it?"

"All right, sir," replied the guard.

"Is there anybody inside now?" inquired the voice.

"Three passengers," returned the guard.

"Then I ask the three passengers to witness this bargain, if they will be so good," said the voice. "My boy, I think we may safely get in."

In pursuance of which opinion, two people took their seats in the vehicle, which was solemnly licensed by Act of Parliament to carry any six persons who could be got in at the door.

"That was lucky!" whispered the old man, when they moved on again. "And a great stroke of policy in you to observe it. He, he, he! We could n't have gone outside. I should have died of the rheumatism!"

Whether it occurred to the dutiful son that he had in some degree over-reached himself by contributing to the prolongation

...r's days, or whether the cold had affected his ... doubtful. But he gave his father such a nudge in ... that good old gentleman was taken with a cough ...sed for full five minutes without intermission, and ... Pecksniff to that pitch of irritation that he said ... very suddenly:—

"... is no room! There is really no room in this coach ...tleman with a cold in his head!"

"..." said the old man, after a moment's pause, "is ...hest, Pecksniff."

...ice and manner, together, now that he spoke out; the ... of the speaker; the presence of his son, and his ... of Mr. Pecksniff, afforded a clue to his identity ...as impossible to mistake.

...n! I thought," said Mr. Pecksniff, returning to his ...ildness, "that I addressed a stranger. I find that I ...a relative. Mr. Anthony Chuzzlewit and his son Mr. Jonas — for they, my dear children, are our travelling companions — will excuse me for an apparently harsh remark. It is not *my* desire to wound the feelings of any person with whom I am connected in family bonds. I may be a Hypocrite," said Mr. Pecksniff cuttingly, "but I am not a Brute."

"Pooh, pooh!" said the old man. "What signifies that word, Pecksniff! Hypocrite! why, we are all hypocrites. We were all hypocrites t' other day. I am sure I felt that to be agreed upon among us, or I should n't have called you one. We should not have been there at all, if we had not been hypocrites. The only difference between you and the rest was — shall I tell you the difference between you and the rest now, Pecksniff!"

"If you please, my good sir; if you please."

"Why, the annoying quality in *you*, is," said the old man, "that you never have a confederate or partner in *your* juggling; you would deceive everybody, even those who practise the same art, and have a way with you, as if you — ha, ha, he! — as if you really believed yourself. I 'd lay a handsome wager now," said the old man, "if I laid wagers, which I don't and never did, that you keep up appearances by a tacit understanding, even before your own daughters here. Now I, when I have a business scheme in hand, tell Jonas what it is, and we discuss it openly. You 're not offended, Pecksniff!"

"Offended, my good sir!" cried that gentleman, as if he had received the highest compliments that language could convey.

"Are you travelling to London, Mr. Pecksniff?" asked the son.

"Yes, Mr. Jonas, we are travelling to London. We shall have the pleasure of your company all the way, I trust?"

"Oh! ecod, you had better ask father that," said Jonas. "I am not a going to commit myself."

Mr. Pecksniff was, as a matter of course, greatly entertained by this retort. His mirth having subsided, Mr. Jonas gave him to understand that himself and parent were in fact travelling to their home in the metropolis; and that, since the memorable day of the great family gathering, they had been tarrying in that part of the country, watching the sale of certain eligible investments, which they had had in their copartnership eye when they came down; for it was their custom, Mr. Jonas said, whenever such a thing was practicable, to kill two birds with one stone, and never to throw away sprats but as bait for whales. When he had communicated to Mr. Pecksniff these pithy scraps of intelligence, he said that "if it was all the same to him, he would turn him over to father, and have a chat with the gals;" and in furtherance of this polite scheme, he vacated his seat adjoining that gentleman, and established himself in the opposite corner, next to the fair Miss Mercy.

The education of Mr. Jonas had been conducted from his cradle on the strictest principles of the main chance. The very first word he learnt to spell was "gain," and the second (when he got into two syllables), "money." But for two results, which were not clearly foreseen perhaps by his watchful parent in the beginning, his training may be said to have been unexceptionable. One of these flaws was, that having been long taught by his father to over-reach everybody, he had imperceptibly acquired a love of over-reaching that venerable monitor himself. The other, that from his early habits of considering everything as a question of property, he had gradually come to look, with impatience, on his parent as a certain amount of personal estate, which had no right whatever to be going at large, but ought to be secured in that particular description of iron safe which is commonly called a coffin, and banked in the grave.

"Well, cousin!" said Mr. Jonas — "because we are cousins, you know, a few times removed — so you 're going to London!"

Miss Merry replied in the affirmative, pinching her sister's arm at the same time, and giggling excessively.

"Lots of beaux in London, cousin!" said Mr. Jonas, slightly advancing his elbow.

"Indeed, sir!" cried the young lady. "They won't hurt us, sir, I dare say." And having given him this answer with great demureness, she was so overcome by her own humour, that she was fain to stifle her merriment in her sister's shawl.

"Merry," cried that more prudent damsel, "really I am ashamed of you. How can you go on so? you wild thing!" At which Miss Merry only laughed the more, of course.

"I saw a wildness in her eye, t'other day," said Mr. Jonas, addressing Charity. "But you 're the one to sit sedate! I say — you were regularly prim, cousin!"

"Oh! The old-fashioned fright!" cried Merry, in a whisper. "Cherry, my dear, upon my word you must sit next him. I shall die outright if he talks to me any more. I shall, positively!" To prevent which fatal consequence, the lively creature skipped out of her seat as she spoke, and squeezed her sister into the place from which she had risen.

"Don't mind crowding me," cried Mr. Jonas. "I like to be crowded by gals. Come a little closer, cousin."

"No, thank you, sir," said Charity.

"There 's that other one a laughing again," said Mr. Jonas; "she 's a laughing at my father, I shouldn't wonder. If he puts on that old flannel night-cap of his, I don't know what she 'll do! Is that my father a snoring, Pecksniff!"

"Yes, Mr. Jonas."

"Tread upon his foot, will you be so good!" said the young gentleman. "The foot next you 's the gouty one."

Mr. Pecksniff hesitating to perform this friendly office, Mr. Jonas did it himself, at the same time crying —

"Now, wake up, father, or you 'll be having the nightmare, and screaming out, I know. Do you ever have the nightmare, cousin?" he asked his neighbour, with characteristic gallantry, as he dropped his voice again.

"Sometimes," answered Charity. "Not often."

"The other one," said Mr. Jonas, after a pause. "Does she ever have the nightmare?"

"I don't know," replied Charity. "You had better ask her."

"She laughs so," said Jonas, "there's no talking to her. Only hark how she's a going on now! You're the sensible one, cousin!"

"Tut, tut!" cried Charity.

"Oh! But you are! You know you are!"

"Mercy is a little giddy," said Miss Charity. "But she'll sober down in time."

"It'll be a very long time, then, if she does at all," rejoined her cousin. "Take a little more room."

"I am afraid of crowding you," said Charity. But she took it notwithstanding; and after one or two remarks on the extreme heaviness of the coach, and the number of places it stopped at, they fell into a silence which remained unbroken by any member of the party until supper-time.

Although Mr. Jonas conducted Charity to the hotel and sat himself beside her at the board, it was pretty clear that he had an eye to "the other one" also, for he often glanced across at Mercy, and seemed to draw comparisons between the personal appearance of the two, which were not unfavorable to the superior plumpness of the younger sister. He allowed himself no great leisure for this kind of observation, however, being busily engaged with the supper, which, as he whispered in his fair companion's ear, was a contract business, and therefore the more she ate the better the bargain was. His father and Mr. Pecksniff, probably acting on the same wise principle, demolished everything that came within their reach, and by that means acquired a greasy expression of countenance, indicating contentment, if not repletion, which it was very pleasant to contemplate.

When they could eat no more, Mr. Pecksniff and Mr. Jonas subscribed for two sixpennyworths of hot brandy-and-water, which the latter gentleman considered a more politic order than one shilling's worth; there being a chance of their getting more spirit out of the innkeeper under this arrangement than if it were all in one glass. Having swallowed his share of the reviving fluid, Mr. Pecksniff, under pretence of going to see if the coach were ready, went secretly to the bar, and had his

own little bottle filled, in order that he might refresh
at leisure in the dark coach without being observed.

These arrangements concluded, and the coach being
they got into their old places and jogged on again. But
he composed himself for a nap, Mr. Pecksniff delivered
of grace after meat, in these words: —

"The process of digestion, as I have been inform
anatomical friends, is one of the most wonderful wo
nature. I do not know how it may be with others, but
great satisfaction to me to know, when repairing on my
fare, that I am putting in motion the most beautiful ma
with which we have any acquaintance. I really feel
times as if I was doing a public service. When I have
myself up, if I may employ such a term," said Mr. Pe
with exquisite tenderness, "and know that I am Going,
that in the lesson afforded by the works within me I
Benefactor to my Kind!"

As nothing could be added to this, nothing was sai
Mr. Pecksniff, exulting, it may be presumed, in his
utility, went to sleep again.

The rest of the night wore away in the usual manner.
Pecksniff and Old Anthony kept tumbling against each
and waking up much terrified, or crushed their heads in
site corners of the coach and strangely tattooed the surf
their faces — Heaven knows how — in their sleep. The
stopped and went on, and went on and stopped, times
number. Passengers got up and passengers got down
fresh horses came and went and came again, with scarce
interval between each team as it seemed to those who
dozing, and with a gap of a whole night between every
it seemed to those who were broad awake. At length
began to jolt and rumble over horribly uneven stones, an
Pecksniff looking out of window said it was to-morrow
ing, and they were there.

Very soon afterwards the coach stopped at the office
city; and the street in which it was situated was alread
bustle that fully bore out Mr. Pecksniff's words abo
being morning, though for any signs of day yet appear
the sky it might have been midnight. There was a dens
too, — as if it were a city in the clouds, which they had
travelling to all night up a magic beanstalk, — and a thick

upon the pavement like oil-cake; which, one of the outsides (head, no doubt) said to another (his keeper, of course), was now.

Taking a confused leave of Anthony and his son, and leaving the luggage of himself and daughters at the office to be called for afterwards, Mr. Pecksniff, with one of the young ladies under each arm, dived across the street, and then across other streets, and so up the queerest courts, and down the strangest alleys and under the blindest archways, in a kind of frenzy; now skipping over a kennel, now running for his life from a coach and horses; now thinking he had lost his way, now thinking he had found it; now in a state of the highest confidence, now despondent to the last degree, but always in a great perspiration and flurry; until at length they stopped in a kind of paved yard near the Monument. That is to say, Mr. Pecksniff told them so; for as to anything they could see of the Monument, or anything else but the buildings close at hand, they might as well have been playing blind man's buff at Salisbury.

Mr. Pecksniff looked about him for a moment, and then knocked at the door of a very dingy edifice, even among the choice collection of dingy edifices at hand; on the front of which was a little oval board, like a tea-tray, with this inscription — "Commercial Boarding-House: M. Todgers."

It seemed that M. Todgers was not up yet, for Mr. Pecksniff knocked twice and rang thrice, without making any impression on anything but a dog over the way. At last a chain and some bolts were withdrawn with a rusty noise, as if the weather had made the very fastenings hoarse, and a small boy with a large red head, and no nose to speak of, and a very dirty Wellington boot on his left arm, appeared; who (being surprised) rubbed the nose just mentioned with the back of a shoe-brush, and said nothing.

"Still abed, my man?" asked Mr. Pecksniff.

"Still abed!" replied the boy. "I wish they wos still abed. They 're very noisy abed; all calling for their boots at once. I thought you was the Paper, and wondered why you did n't shove yourself through the grating as usual. What do you want?"

Considering his years, which were tender, the youth may be said to have preferred this question sternly, and in something

of a defiant manner. But Mr. Pocksniff, without tak umbrage at his bearing, put a card in his hand, and bade h take that up stairs, and show them in the mean while int room where there was a fire.

"Or if there 's one in the eating parlour," said Mr. Po sniff, "I can find it myself." So he led his daughters, w out waiting for any further introduction, into a room on ground floor, where a table-cloth (rather a tight and scanty in reference to the table it covered) was already spread breakfast; displaying a mighty dish of pink boiled beef, instance of that particular style of loaf which is known housekeepers as a slack-baked, crummy quartern, a lib provision of cups and saucers, and the usual appendages.

Inside the fender were some half-dozen pairs of shoes boots, of various sizes, just cleaned and turned with the upward to dry; and a pair of short black gaiters, on one which was chalked — in sport, it would appear, by some tleman who had slipped down for the purpose, pending toilet, and gone up again — "Jenkins's Particular," while other exhibited a sketch in profile, claiming to be the port of Jenkins himself.

M. Todgers's Commercial Boarding-House was a house that sort which was likely to be dark at any time; but morning it was especially dark. There was an odd smell the passage, as if the concentrated essence of all the dinn that had been cooked in the kitchen since the house was lingered at the top of the kitchen stairs to that hour, and, the Black Friar in Don Juan, "would n't be driven awa In particular, there was a sensation of cabbage; as if all greens that had ever been boiled there were evergreens, flourished in immortal strength. The parlour was wainsc and communicated to strangers a magnetic and instinctive sciousness of rats and mice. The staircase was very gl and very broad, with balustrades so thick and heavy that would have served for a bridge. In a somber corner on first landing stood a gruff old giant of a clock, with a pro terous coronet of three brass balls on his head; whom few ever seen — none ever looked in the face — and who see to continue his heavy tick for no other reason than to w headless people from running into him accidentally. It not been papered or painted, had n't Todgers's, within

memory of man. It was very black, begrimed, and mouldy. And at the top of the staircase was an old, disjointed, rickety, ill-favoured skylight, patched and mended in all kinds of ways, which looked distrustfully down at everything that passed below, and covered Todgers's up as if it were a sort of human cucumber-frame, and only people of a peculiar growth were reared there.

Mr. Pecksniff and his fair daughters had not stood warming themselves at the fire ten minutes, when the sound of feet was heard upon the stairs, and the presiding deity of the establishment came hurrying in.

Mrs. Todgers was a lady — rather a bony and hard-featured lady — with a row of curls in front of her head, shaped like little barrels of beer; and on the top of it something made of net, — you could n't call it a cap exactly, — which looked like a black cobweb. She had a little basket on her arm, and in it a bunch of keys that jingled as she came. In her other hand she bore a flaming tallow candle, which, after surveying Mr. Pecksniff for one instant by its light, she put down upon the table, to the end that she might receive him with the greater cordiality.

"Mr. Pecksniff," cried Mrs. Todgers. "Welcome to London! Who would have thought of such a visit as this, after so — dear, dear! — so many years! How do you *do*, Mr. Pecksniff?"

"As well as ever; and as glad to see you as ever," Mr. Pecksniff made response. "Why, you are younger than you used to be!"

"*You* are, I am sure!" said Mrs. Todgers. "You 're not a bit changed."

"What do you say to this?" cried Mr. Pecksniff, stretching out his hand towards the young ladies. "Does this make me no older?"

"Not your daughters!" exclaimed the lady, raising her hands and clasping them. "Oh, no, Mr. Pecksniff! Your second, and her bridesmaid!"

Mr. Pecksniff smiled complacently; shook his head; and said, "My daughters, Mrs. Todgers; merely my daughters."

"Ah!" sighed the good lady, "I must believe you, for now I look at 'em I think I should have known 'em anywhere. My dear Miss Pecksniffs, how happy your pa has made me!"

igged them both; and being by this time overpo
elings or the inclemency of the morning, jerked a
ndkerchief out of the little basket, and applie
er face.

, my good madam," said Mr. Pecksniff, "I kno
your establishment, and that you only receive g
ders. But it occurred to me, when I left home,
ou would give my daughters house-room, and ma
n in their favour."

haps!" cried Mrs. Todgers ecstatically. "Perhap
may say, then, that I was sure you would," said
niff. "I know that you have a little room of your
they can be comfortable there, without appeari
ral table."

ur girls!" said Mrs. Todgers. "I must take that li
ce more."

Mrs. Todgers meant by this that she must embrace them
more, which she accordingly did, with great ardour. Bu
truth was that, the house being full with the exception o
bed, which would now be occupied by Mr. Pecksniff
wanted time for consideration; and so much time, too (
was a knotty point how to dispose of them), that even
this second embrace was over she stood for some moments
ing at the sisters, with affection beaming in one eye and
lation shining out of the other.

"I think I know how to arrange it," said Mrs. Todge
length. "A sofa bedstead in the little third room which
from my own parlour — oh, you dear girls!"

Thereupon she embraced them once more, observing tha
could not decide which was most like their poor mother (
was highly probable, seeing that she had never beheld
lady), but that she rather thought the youngest was, and
she said that as the gentlemen would be down directly, an
ladies were fatigued with travelling, would they step int
room at once?

It was on the same floor, being, in fact, the back pa
and had, as Mrs. Todgers said, the great advantage (in La
of not being overlooked; as they would see, when th
cleared off. Nor was this a vain-glorious boast, for it
rminded, at a perspective of two feet, a brown wall with a
cistern on the top. The sleeping apartment designed fo

oung ladies was approached from this chamber by a mightily onvenient little door, which would only open when fallen gainst by a strong person. It commanded from a similar point of sight another angle of the wall and another side of the cistern. "Not the damp side," said Mrs. Todgers. "*That* is Mr. Jenkins's."

In the first of these sanctuaries a fire was speedily kindled by the youthful porter, who whistling at his work in the absence of Mrs. Todgers (not to mention his sketching figures on his corduroys with burnt firewood), and being afterwards taken by that lady in the fact, was dismissed with a box on his ears. Having prepared breakfast for the young ladies with her own hands, she withdrew to preside in the other room, where the joke at Mr. Jenkins's expense seemed to be proceeding rather noisily.

"I won't ask you yet, my dears," said Mr. Pecksniff, looking in at the door, "how you like London. Shall I?"

"We have n't seen much of it, Pa!" cried Merry.

"Nothing, I hope," said Cherry. (Both very miserably.)

"Indeed," said Mr. Pecksniff, "that 's true. We have our pleasure, and our business, too, before us. All in good time, all in good time!"

Whether Mr. Pecksniff's business in London was as strictly professional as he had given his new pupil to understand, we shall see, to adopt that worthy man's phraseology, "all in good time."

## CHAPTER IX

### TOWN AND TODGERS'S.

SURELY there never was, in any other borough, ci
just in the world such a singular sort of a place as Tod
l surely London, to judge from that part of it
ed Todgers's round, and hustled it, and crushed i
its brick-and-mortar elbows into it, and kept the ai
l stood perpetually between it and the light, was
odgers's, and qualified to be on terms of close relati
and alliance with hundreds and thousands of the odd fan
which Todgers's belonged.

You could n't walk about in Todgers's neighbourho
you could in any other neighbourhood. You groped you
for an hour through lanes and byways, and courtyard
passages; and never once emerged upon anything that
be reasonably called a street. A kind of resigned dist
came over the stranger as he trod those devious mazes
giving himself up for lost, went in and out and round
and quietly turned back again when he came to a dead w
was stopped by an iron railing, and felt that the me
escape might possibly present themselves in their own
time, but that to anticipate them was hopeless. Instances
known of people who, being asked to dine at Todgers's
travelled round and round it for a weary time, with its
chimney-pots in view; and finding it, at last, impossi
attainment, had gone home again with a gentle melancho
their spirits, tranquil and uncomplaining. Nobody had
found Todgers's on a verbal direction, though given wi
minute's walk of it. Cautious emigrants from Scotland
North of England had been known to reach it safely by m
ing a charity-boy, town-bred, and bringing him along with
or by clinging tenaciously to the postman, but these wer
exceptions, and only went to prove the rule that Todgers
in a labyrinth, whereof the mystery was known but to a
few.

Several fruit-brokers had their marts near Todgers's; and one of the first impressions wrought upon the stranger's senses was of oranges — of damaged oranges, with blue and green bruises on them, festering in boxes, or mouldering away in cellars. All day long a stream of porters from the wharves beside the river, each bearing on his back a bursting chest of oranges, poured slowly through the narrow passages; while underneath the archway by the public-house, the knots of those who rested and regaled within were piled from morning until night. Strange solitary pumps were found near Todgers's, hiding themselves for the most part in blind alleys, and keeping company with fire-ladders. There were churches also by dozens, with many a ghostly little churchyard, all overgrown with such straggling vegetation as springs up spontaneously from damp, and graves, and rubbish. In some of these dingy resting-places, which bore much the same analogy to green churchyards as the pots of earth for mignonette and wallflower in the window overlooking them did to rustic gardens — there were trees — tall trees still putting forth their leaves in each succeeding year, with such a languishing remembrance of their kind (so one might fancy, looking on their sickly boughs) as birds in cages have of theirs. Here paralysed old watchmen guarded the bodies of the dead at night, year after year, until at last they joined that solemn brotherhood; and saving that they slept below the ground a sounder sleep than even they had ever known above it, and were shut up in another kind of box, their condition can hardly be said to have undergone any material change when they, in turn, were watched themselves.

Among the narrow thoroughfares at hand, there lingered, here and there, an ancient doorway of carved oak, from which, of old, the sounds of revelry and feasting often came; but now these mansions, only used for storehouses, were dark and dull, and, being filled with wool, and cotton, and the like, — such heavy merchandise as stifles sound and stops the throat of echo, — had an air of palpable deadness about them which, added to their silence and desertion, made them very grim. In like manner, there were gloomy courtyards in these parts, into which few but belated wayfarers ever strayed, and where vast bags and packs of goods, upward or downward bound, were for ever dangling between heaven and earth from lofty cranes.

There were more trucks near Todgers's than you would su
a whole city could ever need; not active trucks, but a
bond race, for ever lounging in the narrow lanes before
masters' doors and stopping up the pass; so that when a
hackney-coach or lumbering wagon came that way, they
the cause of such an uproar as enlivened the whole neigh
hood, and made the very bells in the next church-tower v
again. In the throats and maws of dark no-thoroughfare
Todgers's, individual wine-merchants and wholesale deal
grocery-ware had perfect little towns of their own; and
among the very foundations of these buildings, the groun
undermined and burrowed out into stables, where cart-h
troubled by rats, might be heard on a quiet Sunday, ra
their halters, as disturbed spirits in tales of haunted hous
said to clank their chains.

To tell of half the queer old taverns that had a d
and secret existence near Todgers's would fill a goodly
while a second volume no less capacious might be devo
an account of the quaint old guests who frequented their d
lighted parlours. These were, in general, ancient inhab
of that region — born, and bred there from boyhood — wh
long since become wheezy and asthmatical, and short of b
except in the article of story-telling, in which respect
were still marvellously long-winded. These gentry were
opposed to steam and all new-fangled ways, and held bu
ing to be sinful, and deplored the degeneracy of the t
which that particular member of each little club who ke
keys of the nearest church, professionally, always attribut
the prevalence of dissent and irreligion, though the majo
of the company inclined to the belief that virtue went out
hair-powder, and that old England's greatness had de
amain with barbers.

As to Todgers's itself — speaking of it only as a bo
that neighbourhood, and making no reference to its me
a commercial boarding establishment — it was worthy to
where it did. There was one staircase window in it, (
able of the house, on the ground floor, which tradition
had not been opened for a hundred years at least, and w
abutting on an always dirty lane, was so begrimed and
with a century's mud that no one pane of glass could pe
fall out, though all were cracked and broken twenty

But the grand mystery of Todgers's was the cellarage, approachable only by a little back door and a rusty grating; which cellarage within the memory of man had had no connection with the house, but had always been the freehold property of somebody else, and was reported to be full of wealth, though in what shape — whether in silver, brass, or gold, or butts of wine, or casks of gunpowder — was matter of profound uncertainty and supreme indifference to Todgers's, and all its inmates.

The top of the house was worthy of notice. There was a sort of terrace on the roof, with posts and fragments of rotten lines, once intended to dry clothes upon; and there were two or three tea-chests out there, full of earth, with forgotten plants in them, like old walking-sticks. Whoever climbed to this observatory was stunned at first from having knocked his head against the little door in coming out; and after that was for the moment choked from having looked, perforce, straight down the kitchen chimney; but these two stages over, there were things to gaze at from the top of Todgers's, well worth your seeing, too. For first and foremost, if the day were bright, you observed upon the house-tops, stretching far away, a long dark path, the shadow of the Monument; and turning round, the tall original was close beside you, with every hair erect upon his golden head, as if the doings of the city frightened him. Then there were steeples, towers, belfries, shining vanes, and masts of ships, — a very forest. Gables, house-tops, garret-windows, wilderness upon wilderness. Smoke and noise enough for all the world at once.

After the first glance, there were slight features in the midst of this crowd of objects, which sprung out from the mass without any reason, as it were, and took hold of the attention whether the spectator would or no. Thus, the revolving chimney-pots on one great stack of buildings seemed to be turning gravely to each other every now and then, and whispering the result of their separate observation of what was going on below. Others, of a crook-backed shape, appeared to be maliciously holding themselves askew, that they might shut the prospect out and baffle Todgers's. The man who was mending a pen at an upper window over the way became of paramount importance in the scene, and made a blank in it, ridiculously disproportionate in its extent, when he retired. The gambols

of a piece of cloth upon the dyer's pole had far more in
for the moment than all the changing motion of the o
Yet even while the looker-on felt angry with himself for
and wondered how it was, the tumult swelled into a roar
hosts of objects seemed to thicken and expand a hundred-
and after gazing round him, quite scared, he turned into
gers's again, much more rapidly than he came out; and t
one he told M. Todgers afterwards that, if he had n't do
he would certainly have come into the street by the sh
cut; that is to say, headforemost.

So said the two Miss Pecksniffs, when they retired
Mrs. Todgers from this place of espial, leaving the yo
porter to close the door and follow them down stairs,
being of a playful temperament, and contemplating w
delight peculiar to his sex and time of life any cha
dashing himself into small fragments, lingered behind to
upon the parapet.

It being the second day of their stay in London, the
Pecksniffs and Mrs. Todgers were by this time highly co
tial, insomuch that the last-named lady had already com
cated the particulars of three early disappointments of a t
nature; and had furthermore possessed her young friends
a general summary of the life, conduct, and character of
Todgers, who, it seemed, had cut his matrimonial career
short by unlawfully running away from his happiness
establishing himself in foreign countries as a bachelor.

"Your pa was once a little particular in his attention
dears," said Mrs. Todgers, "but to be your ma was too
happiness denied me. You 'd hardly know who this was
for, perhaps?"

She called their attention to an oval miniature, like a
blister, which was tacked up over the kettle-holder, a
which there was a dreamy shadowing forth of her own vis

"It 's a speaking likeness!" cried the two Miss Peksn

"It was considered so once," said Mrs. Todgers, wa
herself in a gentlemanly manner at the fire; "but I h
thought you would have known it, my loves."

They would have known it anywhere. If they could
met with it in the street, or seen it in a shop-window,
would have cried, "Good Gracious! Mrs. Todgers!"

"Presiding over an establishment like this makes sad

rith the features, my dear Miss Pecksniffs," said Mrs. Todgers. "The gravy alone is enough to add twenty years to ne's age, I do assure you."

"Lor!" cried the two Miss Pecksniffs.

"The anxiety of that one item, my dears," said Mrs. Todgers, "keeps the mind continually upon the stretch. There is o such passion in human nature as the passion for gravy mong commercial gentlemen. It 's nothing to say a joint won't yield — a whole animal would n't yield — the amount of gravy they expect each day at dinner. And what I have undergone in consequence," cried Mrs. Todgers, raising her eyes and shaking her head, "no one would believe!"

"Just like Mr. Pinch, Merry!" said Charity. "We have always noticed it in him, you remember?"

"Yes, my dear," giggled Merry; "but we have never given it him, you know."

"You, my dears, having to deal with your pa's pupils who can't help themselves, are able to take your own way," said Mrs. Todgers; "but in a commercial establishment, where any gentlemen may say, any Saturday evening, 'Mrs. Todgers, this day week we part, in consequence of the cheese,' it is not so easy to preserve a pleasant understanding. Your pa was kind enough," added the good lady, "to invite me to take a ride with you to-day; and I think he mentioned that you were going to call upon Miss Pinch. Any relation to the gentleman you were speaking of just now, Miss Pecksniff?"

"For goodness sake, Mrs. Todgers," interposed the lively Merry, "don't call him a gentleman. My dear Cherry, Pinch a gentleman! The idea!"

"What a wicked girl you are!" cried Mrs. Todgers, embracing her with great affection. "You are quite a quiz, I do declare! My dear Miss Pecksniff, what a happiness your sister's spirits must be to your pa and self!"

"He 's the most hideous, goggle-eyed creature, Mrs. Todgers, in existence," resumed Merry — "quite an ogre. The ugliest, awkwardest, frightfullest being, you can imagine. This is his sister, so I leave you to suppose what *she* is. I shall be obliged to laugh outright, I know I shall!" cried the charming girl; "I never shall be able to keep my countenance. The notion of a Miss Pinch presuming to exist at all is sufficient to kill one, but to see her — oh, my stars!"

...rs for Miss Pinch!" said the footman. He ... ve been an ingenious young man, for he said it very cle... a nice discrimination between the cold respect with ... would have announced visitors to the family, and the ... onal interest with which he would have announced vi... s cook.

"Visitors for Miss Pinch!"

... Pinch rose hastily; with such tokens of agitati... amay declared that her list of callers was not numerous. ... same time, the little pupil became alarmingly upright ... pared herself to take mental notes of all that might b... d done. For the lady of the establishment was curi... natural history and habits of the animal called Gov...

**...d encouraged her daughters to report thereon whenever ...on served; which was, in reference to all parties conc... ...ery laudable, improving, and pleasant.**

**It is a melancholy fact, but it must be related, tha... Pinch's sister was not at all ugly. On the contrary, sh... a good face; a very mild and prepossessing face; and a ... little figure — slight and short, but remarkable for its ne... There was something of her brother, much of him indee... a certain gentleness of manner, and in her look of timid... fulness; but she was so far from being a fright, or a d... or a horror, or anything else, predicted by the two Miss ... sniffs, that those young ladies naturally regarded her with ... indignation, feeling that this was by no means what the... come to see.**

Miss Mercy, as having the larger share of gaiety, ha... the best against this disappointment, and carried it off, i... ward show at least, with a titter; but her sister, not cap... hide her disdain, expressed it pretty openly in her looks ... to Mrs. Todgers, she leaned on Mr. Pecksniff's arm and ... served a kind of genteel grimness, suitable to any st... mind, and involving any shade of opinion.

"Don't be alarmed, Miss Pinch," said Mr. Pecksniff, ... her hand condescendingly in one of his, and patting it wi... other. "I have called to see you, in pursuance of a p... given to your brother, Thomas Pinch. My name — co... yourself, Miss Pinch — is Pecksniff."

The good man emphasised these words as though he ... have said, "You see in me, young person, the benefac...

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ur race; the patron of your house; the preserver of your other, who is fed with manna daily from my table; and in ght of whom there is a considerable balance in my favour at esent standing in the books beyond the sky. But I have no ide, for I can afford to do without it!'

The poor girl felt it all as if it had been Gospel Truth. er brother, writing in the fulness of his simple heart, had ten told her so, and how much more! As Mr. Pecksniff ased to speak, she hung her head, and dropped a tear upon s hand.

"Oh, very well, Miss Pinch!" thought the sharp pupil, crying before strangers, as if you did n't like the situa-on!"

"Thomas is well," said Mr. Pecksniff; "and sends his love id this letter. I cannot say, poor fellow, that he will ever e distinguished in our profession; but he has the will to do ell, which is the next thing to having the power; and, there-re, we must bear with him. Eh?"

"I know he has the will, sir," said Tom Pinch's sister, and I know how kindly and considerately you cherish it, for hich neither he nor I can ever be grateful enough, as we very ften say in writing to each other. The young ladies too," he added, glancing gratefully at his two daughters, "I know ow much we owe to them."

"My dears," said Mr. Pecksniff, turning to them with a mile: "Thomas's sister is saying something you will be glad o hear, I think."

"We can't take any merit to ourselves, Papa!" cried Cherry, s they both apprised Tom Pinch's sister, with a curtsey, that ey would feel obliged if she would keep her distance. "Mr. inch's being so well provided for is owing to you alone, and e can only say how glad we are to hear that he is as grateful s he ought to be."

"Oh very well, Miss Pinch!" thought the pupil again. Got a grateful brother, living on other people's kindness!"

"It was very kind of you," said Tom Pinch's sister, with om's own simplicity, and Tom's own smile, "to come here, ry kind indeed; though how great a kindness you have done e in gratifying my wish to see you, and to thank you with y own lips, you, who make so light of benefits conferred, can arcely think."

"Very grateful; very pleasant; very proper," murmured Mr. Pecksniff.

"It makes me happy too," said Ruth Pinch, who now that her first surprise was over, had a chatty, cheerful way with her, and a single-hearted desire to look upon the best side of everything, which was the very moral and image of Tom; "very happy to think that you will be able to tell him how more than comfortably I am situated here, and how unnecessary it is that he should ever waste a regret on my being cast upon my own resources. Dear me! So long as I heard that he was happy, and he heard that I was," said Tom's sister, "we could both bear, without one impatient or complaining thought, a great deal more than ever we have had to endure, I am very certain." And if ever the plain truth were spoken on this occasionally false earth, Tom's sister spoke it when she said that.

"Ah!" cried Mr. Pecksniff, whose eyes had in the mean time wandered to the pupil; "certainly. And how do you do, my very interesting child?"

"Quite well, I thank you, sir," replied that frosty innocent.

"A sweet face this, my dears," said Mr. Pecksniff, turning to his daughters. "A charming manner!"

Both young ladies had been in ecstasies with the scion of a wealthy house (through whom the nearest road and shortest cut to her parents might be supposed to lie) from the first. Mrs. Todgers vowed that anything one quarter so angelic she had never seen. "She wanted but a pair of wings, the dear," said that good woman, "to be a young syrup," — meaning, possibly, young sylph, or seraph.

"If you will give that to your distinguished parents, my amiable little friend," said Mr. Pecksniff, producing one of his professional cards, "and will say that I and my daughters —"

"And Mrs. Todgers, Pa," said Merry.

"And Mrs. Todgers, of London," added Mr. Pecksniff — "that I, and my daughters, and Mrs. Todgers, of London, did not intrude upon them, as our object simply was to take some notice of Miss Pinch, whose brother is a young man in my employment; but that I could not leave this very chaste mansion without adding my humble tribute, as an Architect, to the correctness and elegance of the owner's taste, and to his just appreciation of that beautiful art to the cultivation of

which I have devoted a life, and to the promotion of whose glory and advancement I have sacrificed a — a fortune — I shall be very much obliged to you."

"Missis's compliments to Miss Pinch," said the footman, suddenly appearing, and speaking in exactly the same key as before, "and begs to know wot my young lady is a learning of just now."

"Oh!" said Mr. Pecksniff, "here is the young man. *He* will take the card. With my compliments, if you please, young man. My dears, we are interrupting the studies. Let us go."

Some confusion was occasioned for an instant by Mrs. Todgers's unstrapping her little flat hand-basket, and hurriedly entrusting the "young man" with one of her own cards, which, in addition to certain detailed information relative to the terms of the commercial establishment, bore a foot-note to the effect that M. T. took that opportunity of thanking those gentlemen who had honoured her with their favours, and begged they would have the goodness, if satisfied with the table, to recommend her to their friends. But Mr. Pecksniff, with admirable presence of mind, recovered this document, and buttoned it up in his own pocket.

Then he said to Miss Pinch — with more condescension and kindness than ever, for it was desirable the footman should expressly understand that they were not friends of hers, but patrons: —

"Good morning. Good-by. God bless you! You may depend upon my continued protection of your brother Thomas. Keep your mind quite at ease, Miss Pinch!"

"Thank you," said Tom's sister heartily: "a thousand times."

"Not at all," he retorted, patting her gently on the head. Don't mention it. You will make me angry if you do. My sweet child" — to the pupil, "farewell! That fairy creature," said Mr. Pecksniff, looking in his pensive mood hard at the footman, as if he meant him, "has shed a vision on my path, refulgent in its nature, and not easily to be obliterated. My dears, are you ready?"

They were not quite ready yet, for they were still caressing the pupil. But they tore themselves away at length; and sweeping past Miss Pinch with each a haughty inclination of

the head and a curtsey strangled in its birth, flounced in passage.

The young man had rather a long job in showing the for Mr. Pecksniff's delight in the tastefulness of the bea such that he could not help often stopping (particularly they were near the parlour door) and giving it expres a loud voice and very learned terms. Indeed, he del between the study and the hall, a familiar exposition whole science of architecture as applied to dwelling-hous was yet in the freshness of his eloquence when they the garden.

"If you look," said Mr. Pecksniff, backing from the with his head on one side and his eyes half-shut that he the better take in the proportions of the exterior: " look, my dears, at the cornice which supports the ro observe the airiness of its construction, especially w sweeps the southern angle of the building, you will fe me — How do you do, sir? I hope you 're well?"

Interrupting himself with these words, he very bowed to a middle-aged gentleman at an upper win whom he spoke — not because the gentleman could he (for he certainly could not), but as an appropriate acc ment to his salutation.

"I have no doubt, my dears," said Mr. Pecksniff, to point out other beauties with his hand, "that that proprietor. I should be glad to know him. It might something. Is he looking this way, Charity?"

"He is opening the window, Pa!"

"Ha, ha!" cried Mr. Pecksniff softly. "All right has found I 'm professional. He heard me inside jus I have no doubt. Don't look! With regard to the pillars in the portico, my dears — "

"Hallo!" cried the gentleman.

"Sir, your servant!" said Mr. Pecksniff, taking off h "I am proud to make your acquaintance."

"Come off the grass, will you!" roared the gentleman.

"I beg your pardon, sir," said Mr. Pecksniff, doubt his having heard aright. "Did you — "

"Come off the grass!" repeated the gentleman warmly

"We are unwilling to intrude, sir," Mr. Pecksniff be began.

"But you *are* intruding," returned the other, "unwarrantably intruding — trespassing. You see a gravel walk, don't you? What do you think it's meant for? Open the gate there! Show that party out!"

With that he clapped down the window again, and disappeared.

Mr. Pecksniff put on his hat, and walked with great deliberation and in profound silence to the fly, gazing at the clouds as he went, with great interest. After helping his daughters and Mrs. Todgers into that conveyance, he stood looking at it for some moments, as if he were not quite certain whether it was a carriage or a temple; but having settled this point in his mind, he got into his place, spread his hands out on his knees, and smiled upon the three beholders.

But, his daughters, less tranquil-minded, burst into a torrent of indignation. This came, they said, of cherishing such creatures as the Pinches. This came of lowering themselves to their level. This came of putting themselves in the humiliating position of seeming to know such bold, audacious, cunning, dreadful girls as that. They had expected this. They had predicted it to Mrs. Todgers, as she (Todgers) could depone, that very morning. To this, they added, that the owner of the house, supposing them to be Miss Pinch's friends, had acted, in their opinion, quite correctly, and had done no more than, under such circumstances, might reasonably have been expected. To that, they added (with a trifling inconsistency), that he was a brute and a bear; and then they merged into a flood of tears, which swept away all wandering epithets before it.

Perhaps Miss Pinch was scarcely so much to blame in the matter as the Seraph, who, immediately on the withdrawal of the visitors, had hastened to report them at headquarters, with a full account of their having presumptuously charged her with the delivery of a message afterwards consigned to the footman; which outrage, taken in conjunction with Mr. Pecksniff's unobtrusive remarks on the establishment, might possibly have had some share in their dismissal. Poor Miss Pinch, however, had to bear the brunt of it with both parties: being so severely taken to task by the Seraph's mother for having such vulgar acquaintances that she was fain to retire to her own room in tears, which her natural cheerfulness and submis-

sion, and the delight of having seen Mr. Pecksniff and hav received a letter from her brother, were at first insufficient repress.

As to Mr. Pecksniff, he told them in the fly, that a g action was its own reward; and rather gave them to und stand that if he could have been kicked in such a cause, would have liked it all the better. But this was no comfort the young ladies, who scolded violently the whole way ba and even exhibited more than once a keen desire to attack t devoted Mrs. Todgers: on whose personal appearance, but p ticularly on whose offending card and hand-basket, they w secretly inclined to lay the blame of half their failure.

Todgers's was in a great bustle that evening, partly ow to some additional domestic preparations for the morrow, a partly to the excitement always inseparable in that house fr Saturday night, when every gentleman's linen arrived at different hour in its own little bundle, with his private acco pinned on the outside. There was always a great clinking pattens down stairs, too, until midnight or so, on Saturda together with a frequent gleaming of mysterious lights in t area, much working at the pump, and a constant jangling the iron handle of the pail. Shrill altercations from time time arose between Mrs. Todgers and unknown females remote back kitchens, and sounds were occasionally heard dicative of small articles of ironmongery and hardware be thrown at the boy. It was the custom of that youth Saturdays to roll up his shirt sleeves to his shoulders, a pervade all parts of the house in an apron of coarse gr baize; moreover, he was more strongly tempted on Saturda than on other days (it being a busy time), to make excur bolts into the neighbouring alleys when he answered the do and there to play at leap-frog and other sports with vagr lads, until pursued and brought back by the hair of his he or the lobe of his ear; thus he was quite a conspicuous feat among the peculiar incidents of the last day in the week Todgers's.

He was especially so on this particular Saturday even l honoured the Miss Pecksniffs with a deal of notice a passing the door of Mrs. Todgers's private room, wh at alone before the fire, working by the light of a sol t, without putting in his head and greeting them w

some such compliments as, "There you are agin!" "Ain't it nice?" — and similar humorous attentions.

"I say," he whispered, stopping in one of his journeys to and fro, "young ladies, there's soup to-morrow. She's a making it now. Ain't she a putting in the water? Oh! not at all neither!"

In the course of answering another knock, he thrust in his head again.

"I say — there 's fowls to-morrow. Not skinny ones. Oh, no!"

Presently he called through the key-hole: —

"There 's a fish to-morrow — just come. Don't eat none of him!" and, with this spectral warning, vanished again.

By and by he returned to lay the cloth for supper; it having been arranged between Mrs. Todgers and the young ladies, that they should partake of an exclusive veal-cutlet together in the privacy of that apartment. He entertained them on this occasion by thrusting the lighted candle into his mouth, and exhibiting his face in a state of transparency; after the performance of which feat, he went on with his professional duties, brightening every knife as he laid it on the table, by breathing on the blade and afterwards polishing the same on the apron already mentioned. When he had completed his preparations, he grinned at the sisters, and expressed his belief that the approaching collation would be of "rather a spicy sort."

"Will it be long before it 's ready, Bailey?" asked Mercy.

"No," said Bailey, "it *is* cooked. When I come up, she was dodging among the tender pieces with a fork, and eating of 'em."

But he had scarcely achieved the utterance of these words, when he received a manual compliment on the head which sent him staggering against the wall; and Mrs. Todgers, dish in hand, stood indignantly before him.

"Oh, you little villain!" said that lady. "Oh, you bad, false boy!"

"No worse than yeself," retorted Bailey, guarding his head, on a principle invented by Mr. Thomas Cribb. "Ah! Come now! Do that agin, will yer!"

"He 's the most dreadful child," said Mrs. Todgers, setting down the dish, "I ever had to deal with. The gentlemen

spoil him to that extent, and teach him such things, that I'm afraid nothing but hanging will ever do him any good."

"Won't it!" cried Bailey. "Oh! Yes! Wot do you go a lowerin the table-beer for then, and destroying my constitooshun?"

"Go down stairs, you vicious boy," said Mrs. Todgers, holding the door open. "Do you hear me? Go along!"

After two or three dexterous feints he went, and was seen no more that night, save once, when he brought up some tumblers and hot water, and much disturbed the two Miss Pecksniffs by squinting hideously behind the back of the unconscious Mrs. Todgers. Having done this justice to his wounded feelings, he retired underground; where, in company with a swarm of black beetles and a kitchen candle, he employed his faculties in cleaning boots and brushing clothes until the night was far advanced.

Benjamin was supposed to be the real name of this young retainer, but he was known by a great variety of names. Benjamin, for instance, had been converted into Uncle Ben, and that again had been corrupted into Uncle; which, by an easy transition, had again passed into Barnwell, in memory of the celebrated relative in that degree who was shot by his nephew George, while meditating in his garden at Camberwell. The gentlemen at Todgers's had a merry habit, too, of bestowing upon him, for the time being, the name of any notorious malefactor or minister; and sometimes, when current events were flat, they even sought the pages of history for these distinctions; as Mr. Pitt, Young Brownrigg, and the like. At the period of which we write, he was generally known among the gentlemen as Bailey junior; a name bestowed upon him in contradistinction, perhaps, to Old Bailey; and possibly as involving the recollection of an unfortunate lady of the same name, who perished by her own hand early in life, and has been immortalised in a ballad.

The usual Sunday dinner-hour at Todgers's was two o'clock, — a suitable time, it was considered, for all parties; convenient to Mrs. Todgers, on account of the baker's; and convenient to the gentlemen, with reference to their afternoon engagements. But on the Sunday which was to introduce the two Miss Pecksniffs to a full knowledge of Todgers's and its society, the dinner was postponed until five, in order that everything might be as genteel as the occasion demanded.

When the hour drew nigh, Bailey junior, testifying great excitement, appeared in a complete suit of cast-off clothes several sizes too large for him, and in particular, mounted a clean shirt of such extraordinary magnitude, that one of the gentlemen (remarkable for his ready wit) called him "collars" on the spot. At about a quarter before five a deputation, consisting of Mr. Jinkins and another gentleman whose name was Gander, knocked at the door of Mrs. Todgers's room, and, being formally introduced to the two Miss Pecksniffs by their parent, who was in waiting, besought the honour of conducting them up stairs.

The drawing-room at Todgers's was out of the common style; so much so indeed, that you would hardly have taken it to be a drawing-room, unless you were told so by somebody who was in the secret. It was floor-clothed all over; and the ceiling, including a great beam in the middle, was papered. Besides the three little windows, with seats in them, commanding the opposite archway, there was another window looking point blank, without any compromise at all about it, into Jinkins's bed-room; and high up, all along one side of the wall, was a strip of panes of glass, two-deep, giving light to the staircase. There were the oddest closets possible, with little casements in them like eight-day clocks, lurking in the wainscot, and taking the shape of the stairs; and the very door itself (which was painted black) had two great glass eyes in its forehead, with an inquisitive green pupil in the middle of each.

Here the gentlemen were all assembled. There was a general cry of "Hear, hear!" and "Bravo Jink!" when Mr. Jinkins appeared with Charity on his arm: which became quite rapturous as Mr. Gander followed, escorting Mercy, and Mr. Pecksniff brought up the rear with Mrs. Todgers.

Then the presentations took place. They included a gentleman of a sporting turn, who propounded questions on jockey subjects to the editors of Sunday papers, which were regarded by his friends as rather stiff things to answer; and they included a gentleman of a theatrical turn, who had once entertained serious thoughts of "coming out," but had been kept in by the wickedness of human nature; and they included a gentleman of a debating turn, who was strong at speech-making, and a gentleman of a literary turn, who wrote squibs

upon the rest, and knew the weak side of everybody's char-
ter but his own. There was a gentleman of a vocal turn,
a gentleman of a smoking turn, and a gentleman of a convi-
turn; some of the gentlemen had a turn for whist, and a la
proportion of the gentlemen had a strong turn for billiards
betting. They had all, it may be presumed, a turn for b
ness, being all commercially employed in one way or oth
and had, every one in his own way, a decided turn for plea
to boot. Mr. Jinkins was of a fashionable turn, being
regular frequenter of the parks on Sundays, and knowing
great many carriages by sight. He spoke mysteriously, t
of splendid women, and was suspected of having once ac
mitted himself with a countess. Mr. Gander was of a wi
turn, being indeed the gentleman who had originated the a
about "collars;" which sparkling pleasantry was now resid
from mouth to mouth, under the title of Gander's Last,
was received in all parts of the room with great applau
Mr. Jinkins, it may be added, was much the oldest of t
party, being a fish-salesman's book-keeper, aged forty.
was the oldest boarder also, and in right of his double se
ity took the lead in the house, as Mrs. Todgers had alre
said.

There was considerable delay in the production of dinn
and poor Mrs. Todgers, being reproached in confidence
Jinkins, slipped in and out at least twenty times to see ab
it; always coming back as though she had no such thing u
her mind, and had n't been out at all. But there was
hitch in the conversation, nevertheless; for one gentlem
who travelled in the perfumery line, exhibited an interest
knick-knack, in the way of a remarkable cake of shaving so
which he had lately met with in Germany; and the gentlem
of a literary turn repeated (by desire) some sarcastic stanzas
had recently produced on the freezing of the tank at the ba
of the house. These amusements, with the miscellaneous c
versation arising out of them, passed the time splendidly, un
dinner was announced by Bailey junior in these terms:—

"The wittles is up!"

On which notice they immediately descended to the ba
quet-hall; some of the more facetious spirits in the rear bak
down gentlemen as if they were ladies, in imitation of t
fortunate possessors of the two Miss Peckniffs.

Mr. Pecksniff said grace — a short and pious grace, invoking a blessing on the appetites of those present, and committing all persons who had nothing to eat to the care of Providence: whose business (so said the grace, in effect) it clearly was to look after them. This done, they fell to, with less ceremony than appetite; the table groaning beneath the weight, not only of the delicacies whereof the Miss Pecksniffs had been previously forewarned, but of boiled beef, roast veal, bacon, pies, and abundance of such heavy vegetables as are favourably known to housekeepers for their satisfying qualities. Besides which there were bottles of stout, bottles of wine, bottles of ale, and divers other strong drinks, native and foreign.

All this was highly agreeable to the two Miss Pecksniffs, who were in immense request, sitting one on either hand of Mr. Jinkins at the bottom of the table, and who were called upon to take wine with some new admirer every minute. They had hardly ever felt so pleasant and so full of conversation in their lives; Mercy, in particular, was uncommonly brilliant, and said so many good things in the way of lively repartee that she was looked upon as a prodigy. "In short," as that young lady observed, "they felt now, indeed, that they were in London, and for the first time too."

Their young friend Bailey sympathised in these feelings to the fullest extent, and, abating nothing of his patronage, gave them every encouragement in his power; favouring them, when the general attention was diverted from his proceedings, with many nods and winks and other tokens of recognition, and occasionally touching his nose with a corkscrew, as if to express the Bacchanalian character of the meeting. In truth, perhaps even the spirits of the two Miss Pecksniffs, and the hungry watchfulness of Mrs. Todgers, were less worthy of note than the proceedings of this remarkable boy, whom nothing disconcerted or put out of his way. If any piece of crockery — a dish or otherwise — chanced to slip through his hands (which happened once or twice), he let it go with perfect good-breeding, and never added to the painful emotions of the company by exhibiting the least regret. Nor did he, by hurrying to and fro, disturb the repose of the assembly, as many well-trained servants do; on the contrary, feeling the hopelessness of waiting upon so large a party, he left the gentlemen to help themselves to what they wanted, and seldom

stirred from behind Mr. Jinkins's chair, where, with his hand in his pockets, and his legs planted pretty wide apart, he l the laughter, and enjoyed the conversation.

The dessert was splendid — no waiting either. The pu ding-plates had been washed in a little tub outside the do while cheese was on, and though they were moist and war with friction, still there they were again — up to the mar and true to time. Quarts of almonds; dozens of orange pounds of raisins; stacks of biffins; soup-plates full of nuts. Oh, Todgers's could do it when it chose! mind that.

Then more wine came on; red wines and white wines, a a large china bowl of punch, brewed by the gentleman of convivial turn, who adjured the Miss Pecksniffs not to l despondent on account of its dimensions, as there were mat rials in the house for the concoction of half a dozen more the same size. Good gracious, how they laughed! How the coughed when they sipped it, because it was so strong; a how they laughed again, when somebody vowed that but f its colour it might have been mistaken, in regard of its mar nous qualities, for new milk! What a shout of "No!" bur from the gentlemen when they pathetically implored Mr. Ji kins to suffer them to qualify it with hot water; and ho blushingly, by little and little, did each of them drink h whole glassful down to its very dregs!

Now comes the trying time. The sun, as Mr. Jinkins sa (gentlemanly creature, Jinkins — never at a loss!), is about leave the firmament. "Miss Pecksniff!" says Mrs. Todge softly, "will you —" "Oh, dear, no more, Mrs. Todgers Mrs. Todgers rises; the two Miss Pecksniffs rise; all the Miss Mercy Pecksniff looks downward for her scarf. Whe is it? Dear me, where *can* it be? Sweet girl, she has it r — not on her fair neck, but loose upon her flowing figure. dozen hands assist her. She is all confusion. The young gentleman in company thirsts to murder Jinkins. She skip and joins her sister at the door. Her sister has her arm abo the waist of Mrs. Todgers. She winds her arm around h sister. Diana, what a picture! The last things visible are shape and a skip. "Gentlemen, let us drink the ladies!"

The enthusiasm is tremendous. The gentleman of a dubi ing turn rises in the midst, and suddenly lets loose a tide eloquence which bears down everything before it. He is n

minded of a toast — a toast to which they will respond. There is an individual present — he has him in his eye — to whom they owe a debt of gratitude. He repeats it — a debt of gratitude. Their rugged natures have been softened and ameliorated that day by the society of lovely woman. There is a gentleman in company whom two accomplished and delightful females regard with veneration, as the fountain of their existence. Yes, when yet the two Miss Pecksniffs lisped in language scarce intelligible, they called that individual "father!" There is great applause. He gives them "Mr. Pecksniff, and God bless him!" They all shake hands with Mr. Pecksniff, as they drink the toast. The youngest gentleman in company does so with a thrill; for he feels that a mysterious influence pervades the man who claims that being in the pink scarf for his daughter.

What saith Mr. Pecksniff in reply? or rather let the question be, What leaves he unsaid? Nothing. More punch is called for, and produced, and drunk. Enthusiasm mounts still higher. Every man comes out freely in his own character. The gentleman of a theatrical turn recites. The vocal gentleman regales them with a song. Gander leaves the Gander of all former feasts whole leagues behind. *He* rises to propose a toast. It is, The Father of Todgers's. It is their common friend Jink — it is Old Jink, if he may call him by that familiar and endearing appellation. The youngest gentleman in company utters a frantic negative. He won't have it — he can't bear it — it must n't be. But his depth of feeling is misunderstood. He is supposed to be a little elevated, and nobody heeds him.

Mr. Jinkins thanks them from his heart. It is, by many degrees, the proudest day in his humble career. When he looks around him on the present occasion, he feels that he wants words in which to express his gratitude. One thing he will say. He hopes it has been shown that Todgers's can be true to itself; and, an opportunity arising, that it can come out quite as strong as its neighbours — perhaps stronger. He reminds them, amidst thunders of encouragement, that they have heard of a somewhat similar establishment in Cannon Street; and that they have heard it praised. He wishes to draw no invidious comparisons; he would be the last man to do it; but when that Cannon Street establishment shall be able to produce such a combination of wit and beauty as has

graced that board that day, and shall be able to serve up (
things considered) such a dinner as that of which they ha
just partaken, he will be happy to talk to it. Until the
gentlemen, he will stick to Todgers's.

More punch, more enthusiasm, more speeches. Eve
body's health is drunk, saving the youngest gentleman's
company. He sits apart, with his elbow on the back of
vacant chair, and glares disdainfully at Jinkins. Gander,
a convulsing speech, gives them the health of Bailey jun
hiccups are heard; and a glass is broken. Mr. Jinkins be
that it is time to join the ladies. He proposes, as a ti
sentiment, Mrs. Todgers. She is worthy to be remember
separately. Hear, hear. So she is — no doubt of it. Th
all find fault with her at other times; but every man fee
now, that he could die in her defence.

They go up stairs, where they are not expected so soon; b
Mrs. Todgers is asleep, Miss Charity is adjusting her hair, a
Mercy, who has made a sofa of one of the window-seats, is
a gracefully recumbent attitude. She is rising hastily, wh
Mr. Jinkins implores her, for all their sakes, not to stir; s
looks too graceful and too lovely, he remarks, to be disturbe
She laughs, and yields, and fans herself, and drops her fa
and there is a rush to pick it up. Being now installed, b
one consent, as the beauty of the party, she is cruel and ca
cious, and sends gentlemen on messages to other gentlem
and forgets all about them before they can return with t
answer, and invents a thousand tortures, rending their har
to pieces. Bailey brings up the tea and coffee. There is
small cluster of admirers round Charity; but they are ou
those who cannot get near her sister. The youngest gentlem
in company is pale, but collected, and still sits apart; for h
spirit loves to hold communion with itself, and his soul nee
from noisy revellers. She has a consciousness of his pres
and his adoration. He sees it flashing sometimes in the cor
of her eye. Have a care, Jinkins, ere you provoke a deep
ate man to frenzy!

Mr. Pecksniff had followed his younger friends up stai
and taken a chair at the side of Mrs. Todgers. He had al
spilt a cup of coffee over his legs without appearing to be aw
of the circumstance; nor did he seem to know that there w
a muffin on his knee.

"And how have they used you down stairs, sir?" asked the hostess.

"Their conduct has been such, my dear madam," said Mr. Pecksniff, "as I can never think of without emotion, or remember without a tear. Oh, Mrs. Todgers!"

"My goodness!" exclaimed that lady. "How low you are in your spirits, sir!"

"I am a man, my dear madam," said Mr. Pecksniff, shedding tears, and speaking with an imperfect articulation, "but I am also a father. I am also a widower. My feelings, Mrs. Todgers, will not consent to be entirely smothered, like the young children in the Tower. They are grown up, and the more I press the bolster on them, the more they look round the corner of it."

He suddenly became conscious of the bit of muffin, and stared at it intently; shaking his head the while, in a forlorn and imbecile manner, as if he regarded it as his evil genius, and mildly reproached it.

"She was beautiful, Mrs. Todgers," he said, turning his glazed eye again upon her without the least preliminary notice. "She had a small property."

"So I have heard," cried Mrs. Todgers with great sympathy.

"Those are her daughters," said Mr. Pecksniff, pointing out the young ladies, with increased emotion.

Mrs. Todgers had no doubt of it.

"Mercy and Charity," said Mr. Pecksniff, "Charity and Mercy. Not unholy names, I hope?"

"Mr. Pecksniff!" cried Mrs. Todgers, "what a ghastly smile? Are you ill, sir?"

He pressed his hand upon her arm, and answered in a solemn manner, and a faint voice, "chronic."

"Cholic?" cried the frightened Mrs. Todgers.

"Chron-ic," he repeated with some difficulty. "Chronic, A chronic disorder. I have been its victim from childhood. It is carrying me to my grave."

"Heaven forbid!" cried Mrs. Todgers.

"Yes it is," said Mr. Pecksniff, reckless with despair. "I am rather glad of it, upon the whole. You are like her, Mrs. Todgers."

"Don't squeeze me so tight, pray, Mr. Pecksniff. If any of the gentlemen should notice us."

her sake," said Mr. Pecksniff. "Permit me—
f her memory. For the sake of a voice from
ou are *very* like her, Mrs. Todgers! What a w

Indeed you may say that!" cried Mrs. Todgers.
afraid it's a vain and thoughtless world," said
f, overflowing with despondency. "These young
t us — oh! what sense have they of their responsi
one. Give me your other hand, Mrs. Todgers."
lady hesitated, and said "she did n't like."
as a voice from the grave no influence?" said Mr. P
with dismal tenderness. "This is irreligious! My
ure."
Hush!" urged Mrs. Todgers. "Really you must n't."
's not me," said Mr. Pecksniff. "Don't suppose
n's the voice — it 's her voice."

Mrs. Pecksniff deceased must have had an unusually th and husky voice for a lady, and rather a stuttering voice, to say the truth somewhat of a drunken voice, if it had borne much resemblance to that in which Mr. Pecksniff sp just then. But perhaps this was delusion on his part.

"It has been a day of enjoyment, Mrs. Todgers, but stil has been a day of torture. It has reminded me of my lo ness. What am I in the world!"

"An excellent gentleman, Mr. Pecksniff," said Mrs. T gers.

"There is consolation in that too," cried Mr. Pecks "Am I!"

"There is no better man living," said Mrs. Todgers, am sure."

Mr. Pecksniff smiled through his tears, and slightly sh his head. "You are very good," he said, "thank you. It a great happiness to me, Mrs. Todgers, to make young peo happy. The happiness of my pupils is my chief object. dote upon 'em. They dote upon me too — sometimes."

"Always," said Mrs. Todgers.

"When they say they have n't improved, ma'am," re pered Mr. Pecksniff, looking at her with profound myst and motioning to her to advance her ear a little closer to mouth. "When they say they have n't improved, ma'a and the premium was too high, they lie! I should n't wis

to be mentioned; you will understand me; but I say to you as to an old friend, they lie."

"Base wretches they must be!" said Mrs. Todgers.

"Madam," said Mr. Pecksniff, "you are right. I respect you for that observation. A word in your ear. To Parents and Guardians — This is in confidence, Mrs. Todgers?"

"The strictest, of course!" cried that lady.

"To Parents and Guardians," repeated Mr. Pecksniff. "An eligible opportunity now offers, which unites the advantages of the best practical architectural education with the comforts of a home, and the constant association with some, who, however humble their sphere and limited their capacity — observe! — are not unmindful of their moral responsibilities."

Mrs. Todgers looked a little puzzled to know what this might mean, as well she might; for it was, as the reader may perchance remember, Mr. Pecksniff's usual form of advertisement when he wanted a pupil; and seemed to have no particular reference, at present, to anything. But Mr. Pecksniff held up his finger as a caution to her not to interrupt him.

"Do you know any parent or guardian, Mrs. Todgers," said Mr. Pecksniff, "who desires to avail himself of such an opportunity for a young gentleman? An orphan would be preferred. Do you know of any orphan with three or four hundred pound?"

Mrs. Todgers reflected, and shook her head.

"When you hear of an orphan with three or four hundred pound," said Mr. Pecksniff, "let that dear orphan's friends apply, by letter post-paid, to S. P., Post Office, Salisbury. I don't know who he is, exactly. Don't be alarmed, Mrs. Todgers," said Mr. Pecksniff, falling heavily against her: "chronic — chronic! Let 's have a little drop of something to drink."

"Bless my life, Miss Pecksniff!" cried Mrs. Todgers aloud, "your dear pa 's took very poorly!"

Mr. Pecksniff straightened himself by a surprising effort, as every one turned hastily towards him; and standing on his feet, regarded the assembly with a look of ineffable wisdom. Gradually it gave place to a smile; a feeble, helpless, melancholy smile; bland, almost to sickliness. "Do not repine, my friends," said Mr. Pecksniff tenderly. "Do not weep for me. It is chronic." And with these words, after making a futile attempt to pull off his shoes, he fell into the fireplace.

ungest gentleman in company had him out
Yes, before a hair upon his head was singed, he
the hearth-rug — her father!
was almost beside herself. So was her sister. Jin
them both. They all consoled them. Everyb
ething to say except the youngest gentleman in
who with a noble self-devotion did the heavy work,
p Mr. Pecksniff's head without being taken any n
anybody. At last they gathered round, and agre
im up stairs to bed. The youngest gentleman in
as rebuked by Jinkins for tearing Mr. Pecksniff's
! But no matter.
y carried him up stairs, and crushed the youngest ge
every step. His bedroom was at the top of the ho
was a long way; but they got him there in cours
He asked them frequently upon the road for a li
drop of something to drink. It seemed an idiosyncrasy.
youngest gentleman in company proposed a draught of wa
Mr. Pecksniff called him opprobrious names for the sugges

Jinkins and Gander took the rest upon themselves,
made him as comfortable as they could, on the outside of
bed; and when he seemed disposed to sleep, they left h
But before they had all gained the bottom of the stairca
vision of Mr. Pecksniff, strangely attired, was seen to fl
on the top landing. He desired to collect their sentiments
seemed, upon the nature of human life.

"My friends," cried Mr. Pecksniff, looking over the ba
ters, "let us improve our minds by mutual inquiry and dis
sion. Let us be moral. Let us contemplate existe
Where is Jinkins!"

"Here," cried that gentleman. "Go to bed again!"

"To bed!" said Mr. Pecksniff. "Bed! 'Tis the voice
the sluggard, I hear him complain; you have woke me
soon; I must slumber again. If any young orphan will re
the remainder of that simple piece from Doctor Watts's col
tion, an eligible opportunity now offers."

Nobody volunteered.

"This is very soothing," said Mr. Pecksniff, after a pa
"Extremely so. Cool and refreshing; particularly to the h
e legs of the human subject, my friends, are a beauti
oduction. Compare them with wooden legs, and obse

the difference between the anatomy of nature and the anatomy of art. Do you know," said Mr. Pecksniff, leaning over the banisters, with an odd recollection of his familiar manner among new pupils at home, "that I should very much like to see Mrs. Todgers's notion of a wooden leg, if perfectly agreeable to herself!"

As it appeared impossible to entertain any reasonable hopes of him after this speech, Mr. Jinkins and Mr. Gander went up stairs again, and once more got him into bed. But they had not descended to the second floor before he was out again; nor, when they had repeated the process, had they descended the first flight, before he was out again. In a word, as often as he was shut up in his own room, he darted out afresh, charged with some new moral sentiment, which he continually repeated over the banisters, with extraordinary relish, and an irrepressible desire for the improvement of his fellow-creatures that nothing could subdue.

Under these circumstances, when they had got him into bed for the thirtieth time or so, Mr. Jinkins held him, while his companion went down stairs in search of Bailey junior, with whom he presently returned. That youth, having been apprised of the service required of him, was in great spirits, and brought up a stool, a candle, and his supper; to the end that he might keep watch outside the bedroom door with tolerable comfort.

When he had completed his arrangements, they locked Mr. Pecksniff in, and left the key on the outside; charging the young page to listen attentively for symptoms of an apoplectic nature with which the patient might be troubled, and, in case of any such presenting themselves, to summon them without delay; to which Mr. Bailey modestly replied that he hoped he knowed wot o'clock it was in gineral, and did n't date his letters to his friends from Todgers's for nothing.

## CHAPTER X

CONTAINING STRANGE MATTER; ON WHICH MANY EVENTS IN T HISTORY MAY, FOR THEIR GOOD OR EVIL INFLUENCE, CHIEF DEPEND.

But Mr. Pecksniff came to town on business. Had he f gotten that? Was he always taking his pleasure with T gers's jovial brood, unmindful of the serious demands, wh ever they might be, upon his calm consideration? No.

Time and tide will wait for no man, saith the adage. I all men have to wait for time and tide. That tide whi taken at the flood, would lead Seth Pecksniff on to fortu was marked down in the table, and about to flow. No w Pecksniff lingered far inland, unmindful of the changes of t stream; but there, upon the water's edge, over his sh already, stood the worthy creature, prepared to wallow in t very mud, so that it slid towards the quarter of his hope.

The trustfulness of his two fair daughters was beauti indeed. They had that firm reliance on their parent's nat which taught them to feel certain that in all he did, he had purpose straight and full before him. And that its noble e and object was himself, which almost of necessity inclu them, they knew. The devotion of these maids was perfect.

Their filial confidence was rendered the more touching their having no knowledge of their parent's real designs, in present instance. All that they knew of his proceedings, w that every morning, after the early breakfast, he repaired the Post Office and inquired for letters. That task perform his business for the day was over; and he again relaxed, w the rising of another sun proclaimed the advent of another p

This went on for four or five days. At length, one mo ing, Mr. Pecksniff returned with a breathless rapidity, stra to observe in him, at other times so calm; and, seeking im diate speech with his daughters, shut himself up with them private conference, for two whole hours. Of all that pas

period, only the following words of Mr. Pecksniff's ce are known: —

w he has come to change so very much (if it should t as I expect, that he has), we need n't stop to inquire. rs, I have my thoughts upon the subject, but I will not them. It is enough that we will not be proud, resentful, rgiving. If he wants our friendship, he shall have it. ow our duty, I hope!"

same day at noon, an old gentleman alighted from a y-coach at the Post Office, and, giving his name, inquired etter addressed to himself, and directed to be left till for. It had been lying there some days. The super- n was in Mr. Pecksniff's hand, and it was sealed with cksniff's seal.

as very short, containing indeed nothing more than an "with Mr. Pecksniff's respectful, and (notwithstanding has passed) sincerely affectionate regards." The old nan tore off the direction — scattering the rest in frag- to the winds — and giving it to the coachman, bade him s near that place as he could. In pursuance of these tions, he was driven to the Monument; where he again d, dismissed the vehicle, and walked towards Todgers's.

ugh the face, and form, and gait of this old man, and is grip of the stout stick on which he leaned, were all ive of a resolution not easily shaken, and a purpose (it little whether right or wrong, just now) such as in lays might have survived the rack, and had its strongest weakest death; still there were grains of hesitation in d, which made him now avoid the house he sought, and to and fro in a gleam of sunlight that brightened the hurchyard hard by. There may have been, in the pres- f those idle heaps of dust among the busiest stir of life, ing to increase his wavering; but there he walked, ing the echoes as he paced up and down, until the clock, striking the quarters for the second time since he en there, roused him from his meditation. Shaking off ertitude as the air parted with the sound of the bells, he rapidly to the house, and knocked at the door.

Pecksniff was seated in the landlady's little room, and itor found him reading — by an accident; he apologised — an excellent theological work. There were cake and

on a little table — by another accident, for w
apologised. Indeed, he said, he had given his vis
was about to partake of that simple refreshment
ren, when he knocked at the door.

Your daughters are well!" said old Martin, layin
at and stick.

r. Pecksniff endeavoured to conceal his agitati
er, when he answered, Yes, they were. They we
s, he said, very good. He would not venture to
ad Mr. Chuzzlewit to take the easy-chair, or to kee
draught from the door. If he made any such sug
would expose himself, he feared, to most unjust su
would, therefore, content himself with remarking th
an easy-chair in the room; and that the door was f
ng air-tight. This latter imperfection, he might
venture to add, was not uncommonly to be met with
houses.

The old man sat down in the easy-chair, and after
moments' silence, said: —

"In the first place, let me thank you for coming to
so promptly, at my almost unexplained request; I need
add, at my cost."

"At *your* cost, my good sir!" cried Mr. Pecksniff, in
of great surprise.

"It is not," said Martin, waving his hand impatiently
habit to put my — well! my relatives — to any perso
pense to gratify my caprices."

"Caprices, my good sir!" cried Mr. Pecksniff.

"That is scarcely the proper word either, in this ins
said the old man. "No. You are right."

Mr. Pecksniff was inwardly very much relieved to l
though he didn't at all know why.

"You are right," repeated Martin. "It is not a
It is built up on reason, proof, and cool comparison.
never are. Moreover, I am not a capricious man.
was."

"Most assuredly not," said Mr. Pecksniff.

"How do you know!" returned the other quickly.
are to begin to know it now. You are to test and pro
time to come. You and yours are to find that I can
stant, and am not to be diverted from my end. Do you

"Perfectly," said Mr. Pecksniff.

"I very much regret," Martin resumed, looking steadily at him, and speaking in a slow and measured tone: "I very much regret that you and I held such a conversation together as that which passed between us at our last meeting. I very much regret that I laid open to you what were then my thoughts of you so freely as I did. The intentions that I bear towards you, now, are of another kind; deserted by all in whom I have ever trusted, hoodwinked and beset by all who should help and sustain me, I fly to you for refuge. I confide in you to be my ally; to attach yourself to me by ties of Interest and Expectation" — he laid great stress upon these words, though Mr. Pecksniff particularly begged him not to mention it — "and to help me to visit the consequences of the very worst species of meanness, dissimulation, and subtlety, on the right heads."

"My noble sir!" cried Mr. Pecksniff, catching at his outstretched hand. "And *you* regret the having harboured unjust thoughts of me! *you* with those gray hairs!"

"Regrets," said Martin, "are the natural property of gray hairs; and I enjoy, in common with all other men, at least my share of such inheritance. And so enough of that. I regret having been severed from you so long. If I had known you sooner, and sooner used you as you well deserve, I might have been a happier man."

Mr. Pecksniff looked up to the ceiling, and clasped his hands in rapture.

"Your daughters," said Martin, after a short silence. "I don't know them. Are they like you?"

"In the nose of my eldest and the chin of my youngest, Mr. Chuzzlewit," returned the widower, "their sainted parent — not myself, their mother — lives again."

"I don't mean in person," said the old man. "Morally — morally."

"'T is not for me to say," retorted Mr. Pecksniff with a gentle smile. "I have done my best, sir."

"I could wish to see them," said Martin; "are they near at hand?"

They were, very near; for they had in fact, been listening at the door, from the beginning of this conversation until now, when they precipitately retired. Having wiped the signs of weakness from his eyes, and so given them time to get up

stairs, Mr. Pecksniff opened the door, and mildly cried in the passage: —

"My own darlings, where are you?"

"Here, my dear pa!" replied the distant voice of Charity.

"Come down into the back parlour, if you please, my love," said Mr. Pecksniff, "and bring your sister with you."

"Yes, my dear pa," cried Merry; and down they came directly (being all obedience), singing as they came.

Nothing could exceed the astonishment of the two Miss Pecksniffs when they found a stranger with their dear papa. Nothing could surpass their mute amazement when he said, "My children, Mr. Chuzzlewit!" But when he told them that Mr. Chuzzlewit and he were friends, and that Mr. Chuzzlewit had said such kind and tender words as pierced his very heart, the two Miss Pecksniffs cried with one accord, "Thank Heaven for this!" and fell upon the old man's neck. And when they had embraced him with such fervour of affection that no words can describe it, they grouped themselves about his chair, and hung over him, as figuring to themselves no earthly joy like that of ministering to his wants, and crowding into the remainder of his life the love they would have diffused over their whole existence, from infancy, if he — dear obdurate! — had but consented to receive the precious offering.

The old man looked attentively from one to the other, and then at Mr. Pecksniff, several times.

"What," he asked of Mr. Pecksniff, happening to catch his eye in its descent; for until now it had been piously upraised, with something of that expression which the poetry of ages has attributed to a domestic bird, when breathing its last amid the ravages of an electric storm; "what are their names?"

Mr. Pecksniff told him, and added, rather hastily — his calumniators would have said, with a view to any testamentary thoughts that might be flitting through old Martin's mind — "perhaps, my dears, you had better write them down. Your humble autographs are of no value in themselves, but affection may prize them."

"Affection," said the old man, "will expend itself on the living originals. Do not trouble yourselves, my girls, I shall not so easily forget you, Charity and Mercy, as to need such remembrance. Cousin!"

said Mr. Pecksniff, with alacrity.

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"Do you never sit down?"

"Why — yes — occasionally, sir," said Mr. Pecksniff, who had been standing all this time.

"Will you do so now?"

"Can you ask me," returned Mr. Pecksniff, slipping into a chair immediately, "whether I will do anything that you desire?"

"You talk confidently," said Martin, "and you mean well; but I fear you don't know what an old man's humours are. You don't know what it is to be required to court his likings and dislikings; to adapt yourself to his prejudices; to do his bidding, be it what it may; to bear with his distrusts and jealousies; and always still be zealous in his service. When I remember how numerous these failings are in me, and judge of their occasional enormity by the injurious thoughts I lately entertained of you, I hardly dare to claim you for my friend."

"My worthy sir," returned his relative, "how *can* you talk in such a painful strain! What was more natural than that you should make one slight mistake, when in all other respects you were so very correct, and have had such reason — such very sad and undeniable reason — to judge of every one about you in the worst light!"

"True," replied the other. "You are very lenient with me."

"We always said — my girls and I," cried Mr. Pecksniff with increasing obsequiousness, "that while we mourned the heaviness of our misfortune in being confounded with the base and mercenary, still we could not wonder at it. My dears, you remember?"

Oh vividly! A thousand times!

"We uttered no complaint," said Mr. Pecksniff. "Occasionally we had the presumption to console ourselves with the remark that Truth would in the end prevail, and Virtue be triumphant; but not often. My loves, you recollect?"

Recollect! Could he doubt it? Dearest pa, what strange, unnecessary questions!

"And when I saw you," resumed Mr. Pecksniff, with still greater deference, "in the little, unassuming village where we take the liberty of dwelling, I said you were mistaken in me, my dear sir; that was all, I think?"

"No — not all," said Martin, who had been sitting with

and upon his brow for some time past, and now loo
pain; "you said much more, which, added to other circu
ces that have come to my knowledge, opened my ey
spoke to me, disinterestedly, on behalf of — I need
him. You know whom I mean."

ouble was expressed in Mr. Pecksniff's visage, as
ed his hot hands together, and replied, with humili
te disinterestedly, sir, I assure you."

know it," said old Martin, in his quiet way. "I
of it. I said so. It was disinterested, too, in you,
that herd of harpies off from me, and be their vict
self; most other men would have suffered them to disp
selves in all their rapacity, and would have striven to r
ontrast, in my estimation. You felt for me, and d
n off, for which I owe you many thanks. Although I
the place, I know what passed behind my back, you see!"

"You amaze me, sir!" cried Mr. Pecksniff; which was t
enough.

"My knowledge of your proceedings," said the old m
"does not stop at this. You have a new inmate in y
house — "

"Yes, sir," rejoined the architect, "I have."

"He must quit it," said Martin.

"For — for yours!" asked Mr. Pecksniff, with a quave
mildness.

"For any shelter he can find," the old man answered.
has deceived you."

"I hope not," said Mr. Pecksniff eagerly. "I trust
I have been extremely well disposed towards that young m
I hope it cannot be shown that he has forfeited all claim
my protection. Deceit — deceit, my dear Mr. Chuzzle
would be final. I should hold myself bound, on proof
deceit, to renounce him instantly."

The old man glanced at both his fair supporters, but es
cially at Miss Mercy, whom, indeed, he looked full in the f
with a greater demonstration of interest than had yet appe
in his features. His gaze again encountered Mr. Pecksn
as he said, composedly: —

"Of course you know that he has made his matrimon
choice!"

"Oh dear!" cried Mr. Pecksniff, rubbing his hair up v

stiff upon his head, and staring wildly at his daughters. "This is becoming tremendous!"

"You know the fact?" repeated Martin.

"Surely not without his grandfather's consent and approbation, my dear sir!" cried Mr. Pecksniff. "Don't tell me that. For the honour of human nature, say you 're not about to tell me that!"

"I thought he had suppressed it," said the old man.

The indignation felt by Mr. Pecksniff at this terrible disclosure was only to be equalled by the kindling anger of his daughters. What! Had they taken to their hearth and home a secretly contracted serpent; a crocodile who had made a furtive offer of his hand; an imposition on society; a bankrupt bachelor with no effects, trading with the spinster world on false pretences! And oh, to think that he should have disobeyed and practised on that sweet, that venerable gentleman, whose name he bore; that kind and tender guardian; his more than father — to say nothing at all of mother — horrible, horrible! To turn him out with ignominy would be treatment much too good. Was there nothing else that could be done to him? Had he incurred no legal pains and penalties? Could it be that the statutes of the land were so remiss as to have affixed no punishment to such delinquency? Monster; how basely had they been deceived!

"I am glad to find you second me so warmly," said the old man, holding up his hand to stay the torrent of their wrath.

"I will not deny that it is a pleasure to me to find you so full of zeal. We will consider that topic as disposed of."

"No, my dear sir," cried Mr. Pecksniff, "not as disposed of, until I have purged my house of this pollution."

"That will follow," said the old man, "in its own time. I look upon that as done."

"You are very good, sir," answered Mr. Pecksniff, shaking his hand. "You do me honour. You *may* look upon it as done, I assure you."

"There is another topic," said Martin, "on which I hope you will assist me. You remember Mary, cousin?"

"The young lady that I mentioned to you, my dears, as having interested me so very much," remarked Mr. Pecksniff. "Excuse my interrupting you, sir."

"I told you her history," said the old man.

"Which I also mentioned, you will recollect, my de
cried Mr. Pecksniff. "Silly girls, Mr. Chuzzlewit—
moved by it, they were!"

"Why, look now!" said Martin, evidently pleased;
feared I should have had to urge her case upon you, and
you to regard her favourably for my sake. But I find
have no jealousies! Well! You have no cause for any
be sure. She has nothing to gain, from me, my dears, and
knows it."

The two Miss Pecksniffs murmured their approval of
wise arrangement, and their cordial sympathy with its inte
ing object.

"If I could have anticipated what has come to pass betw
us four," said the old man thoughtfully — "but it is too la
think of that. You would receive her courteously, yo
ladies, and be kind to her, if need were?"

Where was the orphan whom the two Miss Pecksniffs w
not have cherished in their sisterly bosom! But when
orphan was commended to their care by one on whom
dammed-up love of years was gushing forth, what exhaus
stores of pure affection yearned to expend themselves upon

An interval ensued, during which Mr. Chuzzlewit, in
absent frame of mind, sat gazing at the ground, without u
ing a word; and as it was plain that he had no desire t
interrupted in his meditations, Mr. Pecksniff and his daugh
were profoundly silent also. During the whole of the f
going dialogue, he had borne his part with a cold, passion
promptitude, as though he had learned and painfully rehea
it all, a hundred times. Even when his expressions w
warmest and his language most encouraging, he had retai
the same manner, without the least abatement. But now t
was a keener brightness in his eye, and more expression in
voice, as he said, awakening from his thoughtful mood: —

"You know what will be said of this! Have you
flected!"

"Said of what, my dear sir!" Mr. Pecksniff asked.

"Of this new understanding between us."

Mr. Pecksniff looked benevolently sagacious, and at the s
time far above all earthy misconstruction, as he shook his h
and observed that a great many things would be said of it
doubt.

"A great many," rejoined the old man. "Some will say that I dote in my old age; that illness has shaken me; that I have lost all strength of mind; and have grown childish. You can bear that?"

Mr. Pecksniff answered that it would be dreadfully hard to bear, but he thought he could, if he made a great effort.

"Others will say — I speak of disappointed, angry people only — that you have lied and fawned, and wormed yourself through dirty ways into my favour by such concessions and such crooked deeds, such meannesses and vile endurances as nothing could repay — no, not the legacy of half the world we live in. You can bear that?"

Mr. Pecksniff made reply that this would be also very hard to bear, as reflecting, in some degree, on the discernment of Mr. Chuzzlewit. Still he had a modest confidence that he could sustain the calumny, with the help of a good conscience, and that gentleman's friendship.

"With the great mass of slanderers," said old Martin, leaning back in his chair, "the tale, as I clearly foresee, will run thus: That to mark my contempt for the rabble whom I despised, I chose from among them the very worst, and made him do my will, and pampered and enriched him at the cost of all the rest. That after casting about for the means of a punishment which should rankle in the bosoms of these kites the most, and strike into their gall, I devised this scheme at a time when the last link in the chain of grateful love and duty that held me to my race was roughly snapped asunder; roughly, for I loved him well; roughly, for I had ever put my trust in his affection; roughly, for that he broke it when I loved him most — God help me! — and he without a pang could throw me off, while I clung about his heart! Now," said the old man, dismissing this passionate outburst as suddenly as he had yielded to it, "is your mind made up to bear this likewise? Lay your account with having it to bear, and put no trust in being set right by me."

"My dear Mr. Chuzzlewit," cried Pecksniff in an ecstasy, "for such a man as you have shown yourself to be this day; for a man so injured, yet so very humane; for a man so — I am at a loss what precise term to use — yet at the same time so remarkably — I don't know how to express my meaning; for such a man as I have described, I hope it is no presumption to

say that I, and I am sure I may add my children also (s
dears, we perfectly agree in this, I think?), would bear a
thing whatever!"

"Enough," said Martin. "You can charge no consequen
on me. When do you return home?"

"Whenever you please, my dear sir. To-night, if y
desire it."

"I desire nothing," returned the old man; "that is unr
sonable. Such a request would be. Will you be ready
return at the end of this week?"

The very time of all others that Mr. Pecksniff would ha
suggested if it had been left to him to make his own choi
As to his daughters — the words, "Let us be at home
Saturday, dear pa," were actually upon their lips.

"Your expenses, cousin," said Martin, taking a folded s
of paper from his pocket-book, "may possibly exceed th
amount. If so, let me know the balance that I owe you, wh
we next meet. It would be useless if I told you where I li
just now; indeed, I have no fixed abode. When I have, y
shall know it. You and your daughters may expect to see
before long; in the mean time I need not tell you that
keep our own confidence. What you will do when you
home is understood between us. Give me no account of it
any time; and never refer to it in any way. I ask that
a favour. I am commonly a man of few words, cousin, a
all that need be said just now is said, I think."

"One glass of wine — one morsel of this homely cake
cried Mr. Pecksniff, venturing to detain him. "My dears —

The sisters flew to wait upon him.

"Poor girls!" said Mr. Pecksniff. "You will excuse th
agitation, my dear sir. They are made up of feeling. A l
commodity to go through the world with, Mr. Chuzzlew
My youngest daughter is almost as much of a woman as
eldest, is she not, sir?"

"Which *is* the youngest," asked the old man.

"Mercy, by five years," said Mr. Pecksniff. "We sm
times venture to consider her rather a fine figure, sir. Spe
ing as an artist, I may perhaps be permitted to suggest t
its outline is graceful and correct. I am naturally," said
Pecksniff, drying his hands upon his handkerchief, and look
anxiously in his cousin's face at almost every word, "proud

I may use the expression, to have a daughter who is constructed upon the best models."

"She seems to have a lively disposition," observed Martin.

"Dear me!" said Mr. Pecksniff, "that is quite remarkable. You have defined her character, my dear sir, as correctly as if you had known her from her birth. She *has* a lively disposition. I assure you, my dear sir, that in our unpretending home her gaiety is delightful."

"No doubt," returned the old man.

"Charity, upon the other hand," said Mr. Pecksniff, "is remarkable for strong sense, and for rather a deep tone of sentiment, if the partiality of a father may be excused in saying so. A wonderful affection between them, my dear sir! Allow me to drink your health. Bless you!"

"I little thought," retorted Martin, "but a month ago, that I should be breaking bread and pouring wine with you. I drink to you."

Not at all abashed by the extraordinary abruptness with which these latter words were spoken, Mr. Pecksniff thanked him devoutly.

"Now, let me go," said Martin, putting down the wine when he had merely touched it with his lips. "My dears, good morning!"

But this distant form of farewell was by no means tender enough for the yearnings of the young ladies, who again embraced him with all their hearts — with all their arms at any rate — to which parting caresses their new-found friend submitted with a better grace than might have been expected from one who, not a moment before, had pledged their parent in such a very uncomfortable manner. These endearments terminated, he took a hasty leave of Mr. Pecksniff, and withdrew, followed to the door by both father and daughters, who stood there, kissing their hands, and beaming with affection until he disappeared; though, by the way, he never once looked back after he had crossed the threshold.

When they returned into the house, and were again alone in Mrs. Todgers's room, the two young ladies exhibited an unusual amount of gaiety; insomuch that they clapped their hands, and laughed, and looked with roguish aspects and a bantering air upon their dear papa. This conduct was so very unaccountable that Mr. Pecksniff (being singularly grave him-

ld scarcely choose but ask them what it meant;
n to task, in his gentle manner, for yielding to
tions.
was possible to divine any cause for this merri
— most remote," he said, "I should not reprove
n you can have none whatever — oh, really, really
admonition had so little effect on Mercy that sh
to hold her handkerchief before her rosy lips, a
herself back in her chair, with every demonstrati
ne amusement; which want of duty so offended
niff that he reproved her in set terms, and gave h
ntal advice to correct herself in solitude and contempl
at that juncture they were disturbed by the sou
s in dispute; and as it proceeded from the next room
ct-matter of the altercation quickly reached their ears
"I don't care that, Mrs. Todgers," said the young g
man who had been the youngest gentleman in company o
day of the festival — "I don't care *that*, ma'am," said
snapping his fingers, "for Jinkins. Don't suppose I do."

"I am quite certain you don't, sir," replied Mrs. Tod
"You have too independent a spirit, I know, to yield to
body. And quite right. There is no reason why you sh
give way to any gentleman. Everybody must be well a
of that."

"I should think no more of admitting daylight into
fellow," said the youngest gentleman, in a desperate v
"than if he was a bull-dog."

Mrs. Todgers did not stop to inquire whether, as a m
of principle, there was any particular reason for admitting
light even into a bull-dog, otherwise than by the natural c
nel of his eyes; but she seemed to wring her hands, and
moaned.

"Let him be careful," said the youngest gentleman.
give him warning. No man shall step between me and
current of my vengeance. I know a Cove" — he used
familiar epithet in his agitation, but corrected himself
adding — "a gentleman of property, I mean — who pro
with a pair of pistols (fellows, too,) of his own. If
driven to borrow 'em, and to send a friend to Jinkin
tragedy will get into the papers. That's all."

Again Mrs. Todgers moaned.

ntertained by Mrs. Tod-
tain anecdotes illustrative
r, which she went on to
l quite stern and angry;
solemn voice: —
nquire, what does that
e support of these prem-

about eighteen shillings

d Mr. Pecksniff.
near that as possible,"

ded his arms, looked at

, — is it possible, Mrs.
onsideration as eighteen
nderstan an so far
, ever tant?"
he s n, sir,"
erv g them,
p ecksniff.

ress upon
me!"

rofit of dis-
for eighteen

pon me, Mr.
ndkerchief.
nfully. "Oh,
o barter away
to any mortal

reflection that he
n the passage, and
Anybody pass-
for a good man
a consciousness
s.

please against the gentlemen, or against me; but don't say you 're not understood in this house."

"I 'm not treated as if I was," said the youngest gentleman.

"There you make a great mistake, sir," returned Mrs. Todgers, in the same strain. "As many of the gentlemen and I have often said, you are too sensitive. That 's where it is. You are of too susceptible a nature; it 's in your spirit."

The young gentleman coughed.

"And as," said Mrs. Todgers — "as to Mr. Jinkins, I must beg of you, if we *are* to part, to understand that I don't *set* Mr. Jinkins by any means. Far from it. I could wish that Mr. Jinkins would take a lower tone in this establishment; and would not be the means of raising differences between me and gentlemen that I can much less bear to part with than I could with Mr. Jinkins. Mr. Jinkins is not such a boarder, sir," added Mrs. Todgers, "that all considerations of private feeling and respect give way before him. Quite the contrary, I assure you."

The young gentleman was so much mollified by these and similar speeches on the part of Mrs. Todgers that he and that lady gradually changed positions; so that she became the injured party, and he was understood to be the injurer, but in a complimentary, not in an offensive sense; his cruel conduct being attributable to his exalted nature, and to that alone. So, in the end, the young gentleman withdrew his notice, and assured Mrs. Todgers of his unalterable regard; and having done so, went back to business.

"Goodness me, Miss Pecksniffs!" cried that lady, as she came into the back room, and sat wearily down, with her basket on her knees, and her hands folded upon it, "what a trial of temper it is to keep a house like this! You must have heard most of what has just passed. Now did you ever hear the like!"

"Never!" said the two Miss Pecksniffs.

"Of all the ridiculous young fellows that ever I had to deal with," resumed Mrs. Todgers, "that is the most ridiculous and unreasonable. Mr. Jinkins is hard upon him sometimes, but not half as hard as he deserves. To mention such a gentleman as Mr. Jinkins, in the same breath with *him* — you know it 's too much! and yet he 's as jealous of him, bless you, as if he was his equal."

The young ladies were greatly entertained by Mrs. Todgers's account, no less than with certain anecdotes illustrative of the youngest gentleman's character, which she went on to tell them. But Mr. Pecksniff looked quite stern and angry; and when she had concluded, said in a solemn voice: —

"Pray, Mrs. Todgers, if I may inquire, what does that young gentleman contribute towards the support of these premises?"

"Why, sir, for what *he* has, he pays about eighteen shillings a week," said Mrs. Todgers.

"Eighteen shillings a week!" repeated Mr. Pecksniff.

"Taking one week with another; as near that as possible," said Mrs. Todgers.

Mr. Pecksniff rose from his chair, folded his arms, looked at her, and shook his head.

"And do you mean to say, ma'am, — is it possible, Mrs. Todgers, — that, for such a miserable consideration as eighteen shillings a week, a female of your understanding can so far demean herself as to wear a double face, even for an instant?"

"I am forced to keep things on the square if I can, sir," faltered Mrs. Todgers. "I must preserve peace among them, and keep my connection together, if possible, Mr. Pecksniff. The profit is very small."

"The profit!" cried that gentleman, laying great stress upon the word. "The profit, Mrs. Todgers! You amaze me!"

He was so severe that Mrs. Todgers shed tears.

"The profit!" repeated Mr. Pecksniff. "The profit of dissimulation! To worship the golden calf of Baal, for eighteen shillings a week!"

"Don't in your own goodness be too hard upon me, Mr. Pecksniff," cried Mrs. Todgers, taking out her handkerchief.

"Oh, Calf, Calf!" cried Mr. Pecksniff mournfully. "Oh, Baal, Baal! oh, my friend Mrs. Todgers! To barter away that precious jewel, self-esteem, and cringe to any mortal creature — for eighteen shillings a week!"

He was so subdued and overcome by the reflection that he immediately took down his hat from its peg in the passage, and went out for a walk, to compose his feelings. Anybody passing him in the street might have known him for a good man at first sight; for his whole figure teemed with a consciousness of the moral homily he had read to Mrs. Todgers.

teen shillings a week! oh pitiful, pitiful!

## CHAPTER XI

WHEREIN A CERTAIN GENTLEMAN BECOMES PARTICULAR IN HIS ATTENTIONS TO A CERTAIN LADY; AND MORE COMING EVENTS THAN ONE CAST THEIR SHADOWS BEFORE.

THE family were within two or three days of their departure from Mrs. Todgers's, and the commercial gentlemen were to a man despondent and not to be comforted because of the approaching separation, when Bailey junior, at the jocund time of noon, presented himself before Miss Charity Pecksniff, then sitting with her sister in the banquet chamber, hemming six new pocket-handkerchiefs for Mr. Jinkins; and having expressed a hope, preliminary and pious, that he might be blest, gave her, in his pleasant way, to understand that a visitor attended to pay his respects to her, and was at that moment waiting in the drawing-room. Perhaps this last announcement showed in a more striking point of view than many lengthened speeches could have done the trustfulness and faith of Bailey's nature; since he had, in fact, last seen the visitor upon the door-mat, where, after signifying to him that he would do well to go up stairs, he had left him to the guidance of his own sagacity. Hence it was at least an even chance that the visitor was then wandering on the roof of the house, or vainly seeking to extricate himself from a maze of bedrooms; Todgers's being precisely that kind of establishment in which an unpiloted stranger is pretty sure to find himself in some place where he least expects and least desires to be.

"A gentleman for me!" cried Charity, pausing in her work; "my gracious, Bailey!"

"Ah!" said Bailey. "It *is* my gracious, ain't it? Would n't I be gracious neither, not if I wos him!"

The remark was rendered somewhat obscure in itself, by reason (as the reader may have observed) of a redundancy of negatives; but accompanied by action expressive of a faithful couple walking arm-in-arm towards a parochial church, mu-

tually exchanging looks of love, it clearly signified this youth's conviction that the caller's purpose was of an amorous tendency. Miss Charity affected to reprove so great a liberty; but she could not help smiling. He was a strange boy, to be sure. There was always some ground of probability and likelihood mingled with his absurd behaviour. That was the best of it!

"But I don't know any gentleman, Bailey," said Miss Pecksniff. "I think you must have made a mistake."

Mr. Bailey smiled at the extreme wildness of such a supposition, and regarded the young ladies with unimpaired affability.

"My dear Merry," said Charity, "who *can* it be? Isn't it odd? I have a great mind not to go to him, really. So very strange, you know!"

The younger sister plainly considered that this appeal had its origin in the pride of being called upon and asked for; and that it was intended as an assertion of superiority, and retaliation upon her for having captured the commercial gentleman. Therefore she replied, with great affection and politeness, that it was no doubt very strange indeed; and that she was totally at a loss to conceive what the ridiculous person unknown could mean by it.

"Quite impossible to divine!" said Charity, with some sharpness, "though still, at the same time, you need n't be angry, my dear."

"Thank you," retorted Merry, singing at her needle. "I am quite aware of that, my love."

"I am afraid your head is turned, you silly thing," said Cherry.

"Do you know, my dear," said Merry, with engaging candour, "that I have been afraid of that, myself, all along! So much incense and nonsense, and all the rest of it, is enough to turn a stronger head than mine. What a relief it must be to you, my dear, to be so very comfortable in that respect, and not to be worried by those odious men! How *do* you do it, Cherry!"

This artless inquiry might have led to turbulent results, but for the strong emotions of delight evinced by Bailey junior, whose relish in the turn the conversation had lately taken was so acute, that it impelled and forced him to the instantaneous

ing step, extremely difficult in its nature,
ed in a moment of ecstasy, which is com-
g's Hornpipe. A manifestation so lively
ediate recollection the great virtuous pre-
arances, whatever you do," in which they
They forbore at once, and jointly signified
he should presume to practise that figure
sence, they would instantly acquaint Mrs.
t, and would demand his condign punish-
that lady. The young gentleman having
ess of his contrition by affecting to wipe
with his apron, and afterwards feigning to
of water from that garment, held the door
arity passed out; and so that damsel went
receive her mysterious adorer.
concurrence of favourable circumstances he
awing-room, and was sitting there alone.
e said, "here I am, you see. You thought
ound. Well! how do you find yourself by

ed that she was quite well; and gave Mr.
r hand.
said Mr. Jonas, "and you 've got over the
ney, have you? I say — how 's the other

y well, I believe," returned the young lady.
her complain of any indisposition, sir. Per-
to see her, and ask her yourself?"
" said Mr. Jonas, sitting down beside her
"Don't be in a hurry. There 's no occa-
now. What a cruel girl you are!"
for *you* to know," said Cherry, "whether I

it is," said Mr. Jonas. "I say — did you
You have n't told me that."
at all about it," answered Cherry.
hough?" said Jonas, pondering upon this
id the other one?"
impossible for me to say what my sister
ve thought on such a subject," cried Cherry.
ything to me about it one way or other."

"Did n't she laugh about it?" inquired Jonas.

"No. She did n't even laugh about it," answered Cha

"She 's a terrible one to laugh, ain't she?" said Jonas, ering his voice.

"She is very lively," said Cherry.

"Liveliness is a pleasant thing — when it don't le spending money. Ain't it?" asked Mr. Jonas.

"Very much so, indeed," said Cherry, with a demure manner that gave a very disinterested character to her

"Such liveliness as yours I mean, you know," observe Jonas, as he nudged her with his elbow. "I should have to see you before, but I did n't know where you was. quick you hurried off, that morning!"

"I was amenable to my papa's directions," said Miss ity.

"I wish he had given me his direction," returned her c "and then I should have found you out before. W should n't have found you even now, if I had n't met h the street this morning. What a sleek, sly chap he is! like a tom-cat, ain't he?"

"I must trouble you to have the goodness to speak re spectfully of my papa, Mr. Jonas," said Charity. "I allow such a tone as that, even in jest."

"Good, you may say what you like of *my* father, the so I give you leave," said Jonas. "I think it 's liquid sa tion that circulates through his veins, and not regular How old should you think my father was, cousin?"

"Old, no doubt," replied Miss Charity; "but a fine ol tleman."

"A fine old gentleman!" repeated Jonas, giving the cr his hat an angry knock. "Ah! It 's time he was think being drawn out a little finer too. Why, he 's eighty!"

"Is he indeed?" said the young lady.

"And good," cried Jonas, "now he 's gone so far w giving in, I don't see much to prevent his being ninety nor even a hundred. Why, a man with any feeling ought ashamed of being eighty — let alone more. Where 's hi gion I should like to know, when he goes flying in the f the Bible like that! Threescore-and-ten 's the mark; a man with a conscience, and a proper sense of what 's ex of him, has any business to live longer."

Is any one surprised at Mr. Jonas making such a reference to such a book for such a purpose? Does any one doubt the old saw, that the Devil (being a layman) quotes Scripture for his own ends? If he will take the trouble to look about him, he may find a greater number of confirmations of the fact, in the occurrences of any single day, than the steam-gun can discharge balls in a minute.

"But there 's enough of my father," said Jonas; "it 's of no use to go putting one's self out of the way by talking about him. I called to ask you to come and take a walk, cousin, and see some of the sights; and to come to our house afterwards, and have a bit of something. Pecksniff will most likely look in in the evening, he says, and bring you home. See, here 's his writing; I made him put it down this morning, when he told me he should n't be back before I came here, in case you could n't believe me. There 's nothing like proof, is there? Ha, ha! I say — you 'll bring the other one, you know!"

Miss Charity cast her eyes upon her father's autograph, which merely said — "Go, my children, with your cousin. Let there be union among us when it is possible;" and after a cough of hesitation to impart a proper value to her consent, withdrew, to prepare her sister and herself for the excursion. She soon returned, accompanied by Miss Mercy, who was by no means pleased to leave the brilliant triumphs of Todgers's for the society of Mr. Jonas and his respected father.

"Aha!" cried Jonas. "There you are, are you?"

"Yes, fright," said Mercy, "here I am; and I would much rather be anywhere else, I assure you."

"You don't mean that," cried Mr. Jonas. "You can't, you know. It is n't possible."

"You can have what opinion you like, fright," retorted Mercy. "I am content to keep mine; and mine is that you are a very unpleasant, odious, disagreeable person." Here she laughed heartily, and seemed to enjoy herself very much.

"Oh, you 're a sharp gal!" said Mr. Jonas. "She 's a regular teaser, ain't she, cousin?"

Miss Charity replied, in effect, that she was unable to say what the habits and propensities of a regular teaser might be, and that even if she possessed such information, it would ill become her to admit the existence of any creature with such an unceremonious name in her family; far less in the person of

ed I tell you that she don't?" re-

verbal rejoinder, but he glanced at pression in his face; and said *that* , she might depend upon it. Then even greater favour than before, and lite manner was, to "come a little

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obody thought or said anything upon the ll back into a dark corner on one side of he always spent his evenings, and was d again that night; save once, when a him, in which he was seen to soak his There was no reason to suppose that he e seasons, or that he heard, or saw, or remained, as it were, frozen up — if any ch a vigorous process can be applied to ain thawed for the moment by a word or

ten by desire of Mr. Jonas, and felt and

a beloved sister, "whatever," added Cherry with an angry glance, "whatever her real nature may be."

"Well, my dear!" said Merry, "the only observation I have to make is, that if we don't go out at once, I shall certainly take my bonnet off again, and stay at home."

This threat had the desired effect of preventing any farther alteration, for Mr. Jonas immediately proposed an adjournment, and the same being carried unanimously, they departed from the house straightway. On the door-step, Mr. Jonas gave an arm to each cousin; which act of gallantry being observed by Bailey junior from the garret window, was by him saluted with a loud and violent fit of coughing, to which paroxysm he was still the victim when they turned the corner.

Mr. Jonas inquired in the first instance if they were good walkers, and being answered "Yes," submitted their pedestrian powers to a pretty severe test; for he showed them as many sights, in the way of bridges, churches, streets, outside of theatres, and other free spectacles, in that one forenoon, as most people see in a twelvemonth. It was observable in the gentleman that he had an insurmountable distaste to the inside of buildings; and that he was perfectly acquainted with the merits of all shows, in respect of which there was any charge for admission, which it seemed were every one detestable, and of the very lowest grade of merit. He was so thoroughly possessed with this opinion, that when Miss Charity happened to mention the circumstance of their having been twice or three to the theatre with Mr. Jinkins and party, he inquired, as a matter of course, "where the orders came from!" and being told that Mr. Jinkins and party paid, was beyond description entertained, observing that "they must be nice flats, certainly," and often in the course of the walk, bursting out again into a perfect convulsion of laughter at the surpassing silliness of those gentlemen, and (doubtless) at his own superior wisdom.

When they had been out for some hours and were thoroughly fatigued, it being by that time twilight, Mr. Jonas intimated that he would show them one of the best pieces of fun with which he was acquainted. This joke was of a practical kind, and its humour lay in taking a hackney-coach to the extreme limits of possibility for a shilling. Happily it brought them to the place where Mr. Jonas dwelt, or the young ladies might have rather missed the point and cream of the jest.

The old-established firm of Anthony Chuzzlewit and Son, anchester Warehousemen, and so forth, had its place of busi- ss in a very narrow street somewhere behind the Post Office; ıere every house was in the brightest summer morning very ɔomy, and where light porters watered the pavement, each fore his own employer's premises, in fantastic pattern, in the g-days; and where spruce gentlemen with their hands in ə pockets of symmetrical trousers, were always to be seen in ırm weather, contemplating their undeniable boots in dusty ırehouse doorways, which appeared to be the hardest work ɔy did, except now and then carrying pens behind their ears. dim, dirty, smoky, tumble-down, rotten old house it was, anybody would desire to see; but there the firm of Anthony uzzlewit and Son transacted all their business and their asure too, such as it was; for neither the young man nor old had any other residence, or any care or thought beyond narrow limits.

Business, as may be readily supposed, was the main thing this establishment; insomuch indeed that it shouldered ıfort out of doors, and jostled the domestic arrangements at ry turn. Thus in the miserable bedrooms there were files moth-eaten letters hanging up against the walls; and linen ers, and fragments of old patterns, and odds and ends of iled goods strewn upon the ground; while the meagre bed- ıds, washing-stands, and scraps of carpet, were huddled ɔy into corners as objects of secondary consideration, not to thought of but as disagreeable necessities, furnishing no fit and intruding on the one affair of life. The single ing-room was on the same principle, a chaos of boxes and papers, and had more counting-house stools in it than irs — not to mention a great monster of a desk straddling r the middle of the floor, and an iron safe sunk into the wall ve the fireplace. The solitary little table for purposes of ɛction and social enjoyment bore as fair a proportion to the k and other business furniture, as the graces and harmless ıxations of life had ever done, in the persons of the old man his son, to their pursuit of wealth. It was meanly laid , now, for dinner; and in a chair before the fire sat Anthony ıself, who rose to greet his son and his fair cousins as they ered.

An ancient proverb warns us that we should not expect to

find old heads upon young shoulders; to which it may be added that we seldom meet with that unnatural combination but we feel a strong desire to knock them off; merely from an inherent love we have of seeing things in their right place. It is not improbable that many men, in no wise obedient by nature, felt this impulse rising up within them, when they first made the acquaintance of Mr. Jonas; but if they had known him more intimately in his own house, and had sat with him at his own board, it would assuredly have been paramount to all other considerations.

"Well, ghost!" said Mr. Jonas, dutifully addressing his parent by that title. "Is dinner nearly ready?"

"I should think it was," rejoined the old man.

"What's the good of that?" rejoined the son. "*I* should think it was. I want to know."

"Ah! I don't know for certain," said Anthony.

"You don't know for certain," rejoined his son in a lower tone. "No. You don't know anything for certain, you don't. Give me your candle here. I want it for the gals."

Anthony handed him a battered old office candlestick, with which Mr. Jonas preceded the young ladies to the nearest bedroom, where he left them to take off their shawls and bonnets; and returning, occupied himself in opening a bottle of wine, sharpening the carving-knife, and muttering compliments to his father, until they and the dinner appeared together. The repast consisted of a hot leg of mutton with greens and potatoes; and the dishes having been set upon the table by a slip-shod old woman, they were left to enjoy it after their own manner.

"Bachelor's Hall, you know, cousin," said Mr. Jonas to Charity. "I say — the other one will be having a laugh at this when she gets home, won't she? Here; you sit on the right side of me, and I 'll have her upon the left. Other one will you come here?"

"You're such a fright," replied Mercy, "that I know I shall have no appetite if I sit so near you; but I suppose I must."

"Ain't she lively!" whispered Mr. Jonas to the elder sister, with his favourite elbow emphasis.

"Oh, I really don't know!" replied Miss Pecksniff tartly. "I am tired of being asked such ridiculous questions."

"What 's that precious old father of mine about now?" said r. Jonas, seeing that his parent was travelling up and down e room, instead of taking his seat at table. "What are you oking for?"

"I 've lost my glasses, Jonas," said old Anthony.

"Sit down without your glasses, can't you?" returned his n. "You don't eat or drink out of 'em, I think; and here 's that sleepy-headed old Chuffey got to! Now, stupid. h! you know your name, do you?"

It would seem that he did n't, for he did n't come until the ther called. As he spoke, the door of a small glass office, hich was partitioned off from the rest of the room, was slowly ened, and a little blear-eyed, weazen-faced, ancient man came eeping out. He was of a remote fashion, and dusty, like e rest of the furniture; he was dressed in a decayed suit of ack, with breeches garnished at the knees with rusty wisps ribbon, the very paupers of shoe-strings; on the lower por- on of his spindle legs were dingy worsted stockings of the me colour. He looked as if he had been put away and for- tten half a century before, and somebody had just found him a lumber-closet.

Such as he was, he came slowly creeping on towards the ble, until at last he crept into the vacant chair, from which, his dim faculties became conscious of the presence of rangers, and those strangers ladies, he rose again, apparently tending to make a bow. But he sat down once more, with- it having made it, and breathing on his shrivelled hands to arm them, remained with his poor blue nose immovable above s plate, looking at nothing, with eyes that saw nothing, and a ce that meant nothing. Take him in that state, and he was embodiment of nothing — nothing else.

"Our clerk," said Mr. Jonas, as host and master of the cere- nies; "Old Chuffey."

"Is he deaf?" inquired one of the young ladies.

"No, I don't know that he is. He ain't deaf, is he, ther?"

"I never heard him say he was," replied the old man.

"Blind?" inquired the young ladies.

"N — no. I never understood that he was at all blind," said nas carelessly. "You don't consider him so, do you, fa- er?"

"Certainly not," replied Anthony.

"What is he, then?"

"Why, I'll tell you what he is," said Mr. Jonas, apart the young ladies, "he's precious old, for one thing; and ain't best pleased with him for that, for I think my fa must have caught it of him. He's a strange old chap, another," he added in a louder voice, "and don't underst any one hardly, but *him!*" He pointed to his benev parent with the carving-fork, in order that they might k whom he meant.

"How very strange!" cried the sisters.

"Why, you see," said Mr. Jonas, "he's been addling old brains with figures and book-keeping all his life; twenty year ago or so he went and took a fever. All the t he was out of his head (which was three weeks) he never off casting up; and he got to so many million at last th don't believe he's ever been quite right since. We don't much business now though, and he ain't a bad clerk."

"A very good one," said Anthony.

"Well! He ain't a dear one at all events," observed Jo "and he earns his salt, which is enough for our lookout. was telling you that he hardly understands any one except father; he always understands him, though, and wakes quite wonderful. He's been used to his ways so long, see! Why, I've seen him play whist, with my father f partner, and a good rubber too; when he had no more no what sort of people he was playing against than you have."

"Has he no appetite?" asked Merry.

"Oh yes," said Jonas, plying his own knife and fork fast. "He eats — when he's helped. But he don't whether he waits a minute or an hour, as long as father's h so when I'm at all sharp set, as I am to-day, I come to after I've taken the edge off my own hunger, you kn Now, Chuffey, stupid, are you ready?"

Chuffey remained immovable.

"Always a perverse old file, he was," said Mr. Jonas, s helping himself to another slice. "Ask him, father."

"Are you ready for your dinner, Chuffey?" asked the man.

"Yes, yes," said Chuffey, lighting up into a sentient hu creature at the first sound of the voice, so that it was al

curious and quite a moving sight to see him. "Yes, yes. ite ready, Mr. Chuzzlewit. Quite ready, sir. All ready, ready, all ready." With that he stopped, smilingly, and ened for some further address; but being spoken to no re, the light forsook his face by little and little, until he s nothing again.

"He 'll be very disagreeable, mind," said Jonas, addressing cousins as he handed the old man's portion to his father. le always chokes himself when it ain't broth. Look at n, now. Did you ever see a horse with such a wall-eyed pression as he 's got? If it had n't been for the joke of it, would n't have let him come in to-day; but I thought he 'd use you."

The poor old subject of this humane speech, was, happily himself, as unconscious of its purport as of most other narks that were made in his presence. But the mutton ing tough, and his gums weak, he quickly verified the state- nt relative to his choking propensities, and underwent so ich in his attempts to dine, that Mr. Jonas was infinitely used; protesting that he had seldom seen him better com- ny in all his life, and that he was enough to make a man lit his sides with laughing. Indeed, he went so far as to ure the sisters, that in this point of view he considered uffey superior to his own father; which, as he significantly led, was saying a great deal.

It was strange enough that Anthony Chuzzlewit, himself so l a man, should take a pleasure in these gibings of his esti- ible son, at the expense of the poor shadow at their table. it he did, unquestionably: though not so much — to do him stice — with reference to their ancient clerk, as in exultation the sharpness of Jonas. For the same reason, that young n's coarse allusions, even to himself, filled him with a althy glee — causing him to rub his hands and chuckle cov- ly, as if he said in his sleeve, "*I* taught him. *I* trained n. This is the heir of my bringing-up. Sly, cunning, and retous, he 'll not squander my money. I worked for this; hoped for this; it has been the great end and aim of my e."

What a noble end and aim it was to contemplate in the ainment, truly! But there be some who manufacture idols er the fashion of themselves, and fail to worship them when

they are made; charging their deformity on outraged nature. Anthony was better than these, at any rate.

Chuffey boggled over his plate so long, that Mr. Jonas, losing patience, took it from him at last with his own hands, and requested his father to signify to that venerable person that he had better "peg away at his bread;" which Anthony did.

"Ay, ay!" cried the old man, brightening up as before, when this was communicated to him in the same voice, "quite right, quite right. He 's your own son, Mr. Chamberl! Bless him for a sharp lad! Bless him, bless him!"

Mr. Jonas considered this so particularly childish, perhaps with some reason, that he only laughed the more, and told his cousins that he was afraid one of these fine days, Chuffey would be the death of him. The cloth was then removed, and the bottle of wine set upon the table, from which Mr. Jonas filled the young ladies' glasses, calling on them not to spare it, as they might be certain there was plenty more where that came from. But, he added with some haste after this sally, that it was only his joke, and they would n't suppose him to be in earnest, he was sure.

"I shall drink," said Anthony, "to Pecksniff. Your father, my dears. A clever man, Pecksniff. A wary man! A hypocrite, though, eh? A hypocrite, girls, eh? Ha, ha, ha! Well, so he is. Now, among friends — he is. I don't think the worse of him for that, unless it is that he overdoes it. You may overdo anything, my darlings. You may overdo even hypocrisy. Ask Jonas!"

"You can't overdo taking care of yourself," observed that hopeful gentleman, with his mouth full.

"Do you hear that, my dears?" cried Anthony, quite enraptured. "Wisdom, wisdom! A good exception, Jonas. Ah. It 's not easy to overdo that."

"Except," whispered Mr. Jonas to his favourite aunt, "except when one lives too long. Ha, ha! Tell the other one that — I say!"

"Good gracious me!" said Cherry, in a petulant manner. "You can tell her yourself, if you wish, can't you?"

"She seems to make such game of one," replied Mr. Jonas.

"Then why need you trouble yourself about her?" said Charity. "I am sure she does n't trouble herself much about you."

"Don't she though?" asked Jonas.

l gracious me, need I tell you that she don't?" re-
he young lady.
Jonas made no verbal rejoinder, but he glanced at
rith an odd expression in his face; and said *that*
t break his heart, she might depend upon it. Then
d on Charity with even greater favour than before, and
her, as his polite manner was, to "come a little

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ressive of such a vigorous process can be applied to
ntil he was again thawed for the moment by a word or
m Anthony.
Charity made tea by desire of Mr. Jonas, and felt and

looked so like the lady of the house, that she was in th
tiest confusion imaginable; the more so, from Mr. Jonas
close beside her, and whispering a variety of admiring
sions in her ear. Miss Mercy, for her part, felt the ex
ment of the evening to be so distinctly and exclusively
that she silently deplored the commercial gentlemen —
moment, no doubt, wearying for her return — and yawn
yesterday's newspaper. As to Anthony, he went t
outright, so Jonas and Cherry had a clear stage to the
as long as they chose to keep possession of it.

When the tea-tray was taken away, as it was at l
Jonas produced a dirty pack of cards, and entertai
sisters with divers small feats of dexterity; whereof th
purpose of every one was that you were to decoy so
into laying a wager with you that you could n't do
were then immediately to win and pocket his money
Jonas informed them that these accomplishments were
vogue in the most intellectual circles, and that large s
were constantly changing hands on such hazards. And
be remarked that he fully believed this, for there is
plicity of cunning no less than a simplicity of innocence;
all matters where a lively faith in knavery and mean
required as the ground-work of belief, Mr. Jonas was on
most credulous of men. His ignorance, which was stup
may be taken into account, if the reader pleases, separat

This fine young man had all the inclination to be a p
of the first water, and only lacked the one good trait
common catalogue of debauched vices — open-handedne
be a notable vagabond. But there his griping and pe
habits stepped in; and as one poison will sometimes ne
another, when wholesome remedies would not avail, so
restrained by a bad passion from quaffing his full mea
evil, when virtue might have sought to hold him back i

By the time he had unfolded all the peddling sche
knew upon the cards it was growing late in the evenin
Mr. Pecksniff not making his appearance, the young
expressed a wish to return home. But this Mr. Jonas,
gallantry, would by no means allow, until they had p
of some bread and cheese and porter, and even then
excessively unwilling to allow them to depart; often t
ing Miss Charity to come a little closer, or to stop

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and preferring many other complimentary petitions of
ture in his own hospitable and earnest way. When all
rts to detain them were fruitless, he put on his hat and
at preparatory to escorting them to Todgers's; remark-
t he knew they would rather walk thither than ride;
t for his part he was quite of their opinion.

od night," said Anthony. "Good night; remember me
, ha, ha! — to Pecksniff. Take care of your cousin,
rs, beware of Jonas; he 's a dangerous fellow. Don't
for him, in any case!"

, the creature!" cried Mercy. "The idea of quarrel-
r *him!* You may take him, Cherry, my love, all to
f. I make you a present of my share."

at! I 'm a sour grape, am I, cousin?" said Jonas.

Charity was more entertained by this repartee than one
have supposed likely, considering its advanced age and
character. But in her sisterly affection she took Mr.
o task for leaning so very hard upon a broken reed, and
at he must not be so cruel to poor Merry any more, or
arity) would positively be obliged to hate him. Mercy,
ally had her share of good-humour, only retorted with a
and they walked home in consequence without any
assages of words upon the way. Mr. Jonas being in
ddle, and having a cousin on each arm, sometimes
d the wrong one; so tightly too, as to cause her not a
nconvenience; but as he talked to Charity in whispers
ole time, and paid her great attention, no doubt this was
dental circumstance. When they arrived at Todgers's,
e door was opened, Mercy broke hastily from them, and
stairs; but Charity and Jonas lingered on the steps
together for more than five minutes; so, as Mrs. Tod-
served next morning to a third party, "It was pretty
hat was going on *there*, and she was glad of it, for it
was high time Miss Pecksniff thought of settling."

now the day was coming on when that bright vision
had burst on Todgers's so suddenly, and made a sun-
in the shady breast of Jinkins, was to be seen no more;
t was to be packed like a brown paper parcel, or a fish-
or an oyster barrel, or a fat gentleman, or any other dull
of life, in a stage-coach, and carried down into the country!
ver, my dear Miss Pecksniffs," said Mrs. Todgers, when

ired to rest on the last night of their stay; "never
seen an establishment so perfectly broken-hearted as
is at this present moment of time. I don't believe the
men will be the gentlemen they were, or anything like it
not for weeks to come. You have a great deal to
for, both of you."

modestly disclaimed any wilful agency in this dismal
ate of things, and regretted it very much.

ir pious pa, too!" said Mrs. Todgers. "There's a
My dear Miss Pecksniffs, your pa is a perfect mission-
peace and love."

ertaining an uncertainty as to the particular kind of love
ed to be comprised in Mr. Pecksniff's mission, the young
received the compliment rather coldly.

I dared," said Mrs. Todgers, perceiving this, "to violate
nfidence which has been reposed in me, and to tell you
why I must beg of you to leave the little door between your
room and mine open to-night, I think you would be interested.
But I must n't do it, for I promised Mr. Jinkins faithfully
that I would be as silent as the tomb."

"Dear Mrs. Todgers! what can you mean!"

"Why then, my sweet Miss Pecksniffs," said the lady of the house; "my own loves, if you will allow me the privilege of taking that freedom on the eve of our separation, Mr. Jinkins and the gentlemen have made up a little musical party among themselves, and *do* intend in the dead of this night to perform a serenade upon the stairs outside the door. I could have wished, I own," said Mrs. Todgers, with her usual foresight, "that it had been fixed to take place an hour or two earlier, because, when gentlemen sit up late, they drink, and when they drink, they 're not so musical perhaps as when they don't. But this is the arrangement, and I know you will be gratified, my dear Miss Pecksniffs, by such a mark of their attention."

The young ladies were at first so much excited by the news that they vowed they could n't think of going to bed, until the serenade was over. But half an hour of cool waiting so altered their opinion that they not only went to bed, but fell asleep, and were moreover not ecstatically charmed to be awakened some time afterwards by certain dulcet strains breaking in upon the silent watches of the night.

It was very affecting — very. Nothing more dismal could have been desired by the most fastidious taste. The gentleman of a vocal turn was head mute, or chief mourner; Jinkins took the bass; and the rest took anything they could get. The youngest gentleman blew his melancholy into a flute. He did n't blow much out of it, but that was all the better. If the two Miss Pecksniffs and Mrs. Todgers had perished by spontaneous combustion, and the serenade had been in honour of their ashes, it would have been impossible to surpass the unutterable despair expressed in that one chorus, "Go where glory waits thee!" It was a requiem, a dirge, a moan, a howl, a wail, a lament; an abstract of everything that is sorrowful and hideous in sound. The flute of the youngest gentleman was wild and fitful. It came and went in gusts, like the wind. For a long time together he seemed to have left off, and when it was quite settled by Mrs. Todgers and the young ladies, that, overcome by his feelings, he had retired in tears, he unexpectedly turned up again at the very top of the tune, gasping for breath. He was a tremendous performer. There was no knowing where to have him; and exactly when you thought he was doing nothing at all, then was he doing the very thing that ought to astonish you most.

There were several of these concerted pieces; perhaps two or three too many, though that, as Mrs. Todgers said, was a fault on the right side. But even then, even at that solemn moment, when the thrilling sounds may be presumed to have penetrated into the very depths of his nature, if he had any depths, Jinkins could n't leave the youngest gentleman alone. He asked him distinctly, before the second song began — as a personal favour too, mark the villain in that — not to play. Yes, he said so; not to play. The breathing of the youngest gentleman was heard through the keyhole of the door. He *did n't* play. What vent was a flute for the passions swelling up within his breast? A trombone would have been a world too mild.

The serenade approached its close. Its crowning interest was at hand. The gentleman of a literary turn had written a song on the departure of the ladies, and adapted it to an old tune. They all joined, except the youngest gentleman in company, who, for the reasons aforesaid, maintained a fearful silence. The song (which was of a classical nature) invoked

of Apollo, and demanded to know what would
Todgers's when CHARITY and MERCY were banished
walls. The oracle delivered no opinion particular
membering, according to the not infrequent practice
om the earliest ages down to the present time. I
ce of enlightenment on that subject, the strain deserte
ent on to show that the Miss Pecksniffs were near
Rule Britannia, and that if Great Britain had n't be
there could have been no Miss Pecksniffs. And bein
nautical tack, it closed with this verse:—

"All hail to the vessel of Pecksniff the sire!
And favouring breezes to fan;
While Tritons flock round it, and proudly admire
The architect, artist, and man!"

y presented this beautiful picture to the imaginatio
, gentlemen gradually withdrew to bed to give the music t
effect of distance; and so it died away, and Todgers's was l
to its repose.

Mr. Bailey reserved his vocal offering until the morning
when he put his head into the room as the young ladies we
kneeling before their trunks, packing up, and treated them t
an imitation of the voice of a young dog in trying circum
stances; when that animal is supposed by persons of a live
fancy to relieve his feelings by calling for pen and ink.

"Well, young ladies," said the youth, "so you 're a goin
home, are you; worse luck!"

"Yes, Bailey, we 're going home," returned Mercy.

"Ain't you a going to leave none of 'em a lock of you
hair!" inquired the youth. "It 's real, ain't it!"

They laughed at this, and told him of course it was.

"Oh, is it of course though!" said Bailey. "I know bette
than that. Hers ain't. Why, I see it hanging up once, o
that nail by the winder. Besides, I 've gone behind her a
dinner-time and pulled it, and she never know'd. I say
young ladies — I 'm a going to leave. I ain't a going to stan
being called names by her no longer."

Miss Mercy inquired what his plans for the future might
be, in reply to whom Mr. Bailey intimated that he thought o
going either into top-boots or into the army.

"Into the army!" cried the young ladies, with a laugh.

"Ah!" said Bailey, "why not! There 's a many drummer

in the Tower. I'm acquainted with 'em. Don't their country set a valley on 'em, mind you! Not at all!"

"You 'll be shot, I see," observed Mercy.

"Well!" cried Mr. Bailey, "wot if I am? There 's something gamey in it, young ladies, ain't there? I'd sooner be hit with a cannon-ball than a rolling-pin, and she 's always a catching up something of that sort, and throwing it at me, wen the gentlemans' appetites is good. Wot," said Mr. Bailey, stung by the recollection of his wrongs, "wot if they *do* consume the per-vishuns. It ain't *my* fault, is it?"

"Surely no one says it is," said Mercy.

"Don't they though?" retorted the youth. "No. Yes. Ah! Oh! No one may n't say it is! but some one knows it is. But I ain't a going to have every rise in prices wisited on me. I ain't a going to be killed, because the markets is dear. I won't stop. And therefore," added Mr. Bailey, relenting into a smile, "wotever you mean to give me, you 'd better give me all at once, becos if ever you come back agin, I shan't be here; and as to the other boy, *he* won't deserve nothin, *I* know."

The young ladies, on behalf of Mr. Pecksniff and themselves, acted on this thoughtful advice; and in consideration of their private friendship, presented Mr. Bailey with a gratuity so liberal that he could hardly do enough to show his gratitude; which found but an imperfect vent, during the remainder of the day, in divers secret slaps upon his pocket, and other such facetious pantomime. Nor was it confined to these ebullitions; for besides crushing a bandbox with a bonnet in it, he seriously damaged Mr. Pecksniff's luggage, by ardently hauling it down from the top of the house; and in short evinced, by every means in his power, a lively sense of the favours he had received from that gentleman and his family.

Mr. Pecksniff and Mr. Jinkins came home to dinner, arm-in-arm, for the latter gentleman had made half-holiday on purpose; thus gaining an immense advantage over the youngest gentleman and the rest, whose time, as it perversely chanced, was all bespoke until the evening. The bottle of wine was Mr. Pecksniff's treat, and they were very sociable indeed; though full of lamentations on the necessity of parting. While they were in the midst of their enjoyment, old Anthony and

e announced; much to the surprise of Mr. Peck- greatly to the discomfiture of Jinkins.

o say good-by, you see," said Anthony, in a low . Pecksniff, as they took their seats apart at the the rest conversed among themselves. "Where's division between you and me? We are the two pair of scissors, when apart, Pecksniff; but together thing. Eh!"

, my good sir," rejoined Mr. Pecksniff, "is ful."

know about that," said the old man, "for there are ple I would rather differ from than agree with. But my opinion of you."

cksniff, still having "hypocrite" in his mind, only a motion of his head, which was something between tive bow and a negative shake.

"Complimentary," said Anthony. "Complimentary, upon my word. It was an involuntary tribute to your abilities, even at the time; and it was not a time to suggest compliments either. But we agreed in the coach, you know, that we quite understood each other."

"Oh, quite!" assented Mr. Pecksniff, in a manner which implied that he himself was misunderstood most cruelly, but would not complain.

Anthony glanced at his son as he sat beside Miss Charity, and then at Mr. Pecksniff, and then at his son again, very many times. It happened that Mr. Pecksniff's glances took a similar direction: but when he became aware of it, he first cast down his eyes, and then closed them; as if he were determined that the old man should read nothing there.

"Jonas is a shrewd lad," said the old man.

"He appears," rejoined Mr. Pecksniff in his most candid manner, "to be very shrewd."

"And careful," said the old man.

"And careful, I have no doubt," returned Mr. Pecksniff.

"Look ye!" said Anthony in his ear. "I think he is sweet upon your daughter."

"I, my good sir," said Mr. Pecksniff, with his eyes still closed, "young people — young people — a kind of cousins, too — no more sweetness than is in that, sir."

"Why, there is very little sweetness in that, according to

our experience," returned Anthony. "Is n't there a trifle more here?"

"Impossible to say," rejoined Mr. Pecksniff. "Quite impossible! You surprise me."

"Yes, I know that," said the old man drily. "It may last — I mean the sweetness, not the surprise — and it may die off. Supposing it should last, perhaps (you having feathered your nest pretty well, and I having done the same) we might have a mutual interest in the matter."

Mr. Pecksniff, smiling gently, was about to speak, but Anthony stopped him.

"I know what you are going to say. It 's quite unnecessary. You have never thought of this for a moment; and in a point so nearly affecting the happiness of your dear child, you could n't, as a tender father, express an opinion; and so forth. Yes, quite right. And like you! But it seems to me, my dear Pecksniff," added Anthony, laying his hand upon his sleeve, "that if you and I kept up the joke of pretending not to see this, one of us might possibly be placed in a position of disadvantage; and as I am very unwilling to be that party myself, you will excuse my taking the liberty of putting the matter beyond a doubt, thus early; and having it distinctly understood, as it is now, that we do see it, and do know it. Thank you for your attention. We are now upon an equal footing; which is agreeable to us both, I am sure."

He rose as he spoke; and giving Mr. Pecksniff a nod of intelligence, moved away from him to where the young people were sitting: leaving that good man somewhat puzzled and discomfited by such very plain-dealing, and not quite free from a sense of having been foiled in the exercise of his familiar weapons.

But the night-coach had a punctual character, and it was time to join it at the office; which was so near at hand, that they had already sent their luggage, and arranged to walk. Thither the whole party repaired, therefore, after no more delay than sufficed for the equipment of the Miss Pecksniffs and Mrs. Todgers. They found the coach already at its starting-place, and the horses in; there, too, were a large majority of the commercial gentlemen, including the youngest, who was visibly agitated, and in a state of deep mental dejection.

Nothing could equal the distress of Mrs. Todgers in parting

roung ladies, except the strong emotions with whi
adieu to Mr. Pecksniff. Never surely was a pock
ief taken in and out of a flat reticule so often as M
was, as she stood upon the pavement by the co
orted on either side by a commercial gentleman; a
ht of the coach-lamps caught such brief snatches a
of the good man's face as the constant interpositi
inkins allowed. For Jinkins, to the last the young
an's rock ahead in life, stood upon the coach-step ba
the ladies. Upon the other step was Mr. Jonas, w
ined that position in right of his cousinship; whereas t
est gentleman, who had been first upon the ground, w
n the booking-office among the black and red placard
portraits of fast coaches, where he was ignominiou
ed by porters, and had to contend and strive perpetual
heavy baggage. This false position, combined with h
nervous excitement, brought about the very consummation a
catastrophe of his miseries; for when, in the moment of pa
ing, he aimed a flower — a hothouse flower, that had cost mo
— at the fair hand of Mercy, it reached, instead, the coachm
on the box, who thanked him kindly, and stuck it in his bu
ton-hole.

They were off now; and Todgers's was alone again. The tw
young ladies, leaning back in their separate corners, resign
themselves to their own regretful thoughts. But Mr. Pec
sniff, dismissing all ephemeral considerations of social pleasu
and enjoyment, concentrated his meditations on the one gr
virtuous purpose before him, of casting out that ingrate an
deceiver, whose presence yet troubled his domestic hearth, an
was a sacrilege upon the altars of his household gods.

## CHAPTER XII

WILL BE SEEN IN THE LONG RUN, IF NOT IN THE SHORT ONE, TO CONCERN MR. PINCH AND OTHERS NEARLY: MR. PECKSNIFF ASSERTS THE DIGNITY OF OUTRAGED VIRTUE; YOUNG MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT FORMS A DESPERATE RESOLUTION.

Mr. Pinch and Martin, little dreaming of the stormy weather that impended, made themselves very comfortable in the Pecksniffian halls, and improved their friendship daily. Martin's facility, both of invention and execution, being remarkable, the grammar-school proceeded with great vigour; and Tom repeatedly declared, that if there were anything like certainty in human affairs, or impartiality in human judges, a design so new and full of merit could not fail to carry off the first prize when the time of competition arrived. Without being quite so sanguine himself, Martin had his hopeful anticipations too; and they served to make him brisk and eager at his task.

"If I should turn out a great architect, Tom," said the new pupil one day, as he stood at a little distance from his drawing, and eyed it with much complacency, "I'll tell you what should be one of the things I'd build."

"Ay!" cried Tom. "What?"

"Why, your fortune."

"No!" said Tom Pinch, quite as much delighted as if the thing were done. "Would you though? How kind of you to say so."

"I'd build it up, Tom," returned Martin, "on such a strong foundation, that it should last your life — ay, and your children's lives too, and their children's after them. I'd be your patron, Tom. I'd take you under my protection. Let me see the man who should give the cold shoulder to anybody I chose to protect and patronise, if I were at the top of the tree, Tom!"

"Now, I don't think," said Mr. Pinch, "upon my word, that I was ever more gratified than by this. I really don't."

I mean what I say," retorted Martin with a mann
ee and easy in its condescension to, not to say in its co
n for, the other, as if he were already First Architect
ary to all the Crowned Heads in Europe. "I 'd do it
provide for you."

am afraid," said Tom, shaking his head, "that I sha
mighty awkward person to provide for."

h, pooh!" rejoined Martin. "Never mind that.
it in my head to say, 'Pinch is a clever fellow
ve of Pinch;' I should like to know the man who wo
re to put himself in opposition to me. Besides, confo
Tom, you could be useful to me in a hundred ways."

If I were not useful in one or two, it should n't be
of trying," said Tom.

For instance," pursued Martin, after a short reflecti
you 'd be a capital fellow, now, to see that my ideas w
properly carried out; and to overlook the works in their pr
ress before they were sufficiently advanced to be very intere
ing to *me*; and to take all that sort of plain sailing. Th
you 'd be a splendid fellow to show people over my studies a
to talk about Art to 'em, when I could n't be bored myse
and all that kind of thing. For it would be devilish cre
table, Tom (I 'm quite in earnest, I give you my word),
have a man of your information about one, instead of a
ordinary blockhead. Oh, I 'd take care of you. You d
useful, rely upon it!"

To say that Tom had no idea of playing first fiddle in a
social orchestra, but was always quite satisfied to be set d
for the hundred and fiftieth violin in the band, or thereabo
is to express his modesty in very inadequate terms. He
much delighted, therefore, by these observations.

"I should be married to her then, Tom, of course," c
Martin.

What was that which checked Tom Pinch so suddenly
the high flow of his gladness, bringing the blood into his h
est cheeks, and a remorseful feeling to his honest heart, a
he were unworthy of his friend's regard!

"I should be married to her then," said Martin, look
with a smile towards the light, "and we should have, I ho
children about us. They 'd be very fond of you, Tom."

But not a word said Mr. Pinch. The words he would h

uttered died upon his lips, and found a life more spiritual in self-denying thoughts.

"All the children hereabouts are fond of you, Tom, and mine would be, of course," pursued Martin. "Perhaps I might name one of 'em after you. Tom, eh? Well, I don't know, Tom's not a bad name. Thomas Pinch Chuzzlewit. T. P. C. on his pinafores — no objection to that, I should say?"

Tom cleared his throat, and smiled.

"*She* would like you, Tom, I know," said Martin.

"Ay!" cried Tom Pinch faintly.

"I can tell exactly what she would think of you," said Martin, leaning his chin upon his hand, and looking through the window-glass as if he read there what he said; "I know her so well. She would smile, Tom, often at first when you spoke to her, or when she looked at you — merrily, too — but you would n't mind that. A brighter smile you never saw!"

"No, no," said Tom, "I would n't mind that."

"She would be as tender with you, Tom," said Martin, "as if you were a child yourself. So you are almost, in some things, ain't you, Tom?"

Mr. Pinch nodded his entire assent.

"She would always be kind and good-humoured, and glad to see you," said Martin; "and when she found out exactly what sort of fellow you were (which she 'd do, very soon), she would pretend to give you little commissions to execute, and to ask little services of you, which she knew you were burning to render; so that when she really pleased you most, she would try to make you think you most pleased her. She would take to you uncommonly, Tom; and would understand you far more delicately than I ever shall; and would often say, I know, that you were a harmless, gentle, well-intentioned good fellow."

How silent Tom Pinch was!

"In honour of old times," said Martin, "and of her having heard you play the organ in this damp little church down here — for nothing, too — we will have one in the house. I shall build an architectural music-room on a plan of my own, and it 'll look rather knowing in a recess at one end. There you shall play away, Tom, till you tire yourself; and, as you like to do so in the dark, it shall *be* dark; and many 's the summer evening she and I will sit and listen to you, Tom; be sure of that!"

have required a stronger effort on Tom Pinch's
he seat on which he sat, and shake his friend by
th nothing but serenity and grateful feeling pa
e; it may have required a stronger effort to per
le act with a pure heart, than to achieve many
leed to which the doubtful trumpet blown by I
y resounded. Doubtful because from its long h
scenes of violence, the smoke and steam of death
the keys of that brave instrument; and it is not al
notes are either true or tuneful.

a proof of the kindness of human nature," said T
eristically putting himself quite out of sight in the
"that everybody who comes here, as you have don
considerate and affectionate to me than I should have
to hope, if I were the most sanguine creature in
; or should have any power to express, if I were the
eloquent. It really overpowers me. But trust me," Tom, "that I am not ungrateful — that I never forget — that, if I can ever prove the truth of my words to you, I w

"That 's all right," observed Martin, leaning back in chair with a hand in each pocket, and yawning dre "Very fine talking, Tom; but I 'm at Pecksniff's, I remem and perhaps a mile or so out of the high-road to fortune at this minute. So you 've heard again this morning what 's his name, eh!"

"Who may that be!" asked Tom, seeming to enter a protest on behalf of the dignity of an absent person.

"*You* know. What is it! — Northkey."

"Westlock," rejoined Tom, in rather a louder tone usual.

"Ah! to be sure," said Martin, "Westlock. I knew it something connected with a point of the compass and a Well! and what says Westlock!"

"Oh! he has come into his property," answered Tom, ding his head and smiling.

"He 's a lucky dog," said Martin. "I wish it were instead. Is that all the mystery you were to tell me!"

"No," said Tom; "not all."

"What 's the rest!" asked Martin.

"For the matter of that," said Tom, "it 's no mystery, you won't think much of it; but it 's very pleasant to

John always used to say when he was here, 'Mark my words, Pinch. When my father's executors cash up' — he used strange expressions now and then, but that was his way."

"Cash up's a very good expression," observed Martin, "when other people don't apply it to you. Well! — what a slow fellow you are, Pinch!"

"Yes, I am, I know," said Tom; "but you'll make me nervous if you tell me so. I'm afraid you have put me out a little now, for I forget what I was going to say."

"When John's father's executors cashed up" — said Martin impatiently.

"Oh yes, to be sure," cried Tom; "yes. 'Then,' says John, 'I'll give you a dinner, Pinch, and come down to Salisbury on purpose.' Now, when John wrote the other day — the morning Pecksniff left, you know — he said his business was on the point of being immediately settled, and as he was to receive his money directly, when could I meet him at Salisbury? I wrote and said, any day this week; and I told him besides, that there was a new pupil here, and what a fine fellow you were, and what friends we had become. Upon which John writes back this letter" — Tom produced it — "fixes to-morrow; sends his compliments to you; and begs that we three may have the pleasure of dining together — not at the house where you and I were, either, but at the very first hotel in the town. Read what he says."

"Very well," said Martin, glancing over it with his customary coolness; "much obliged to him. I'm agreeable."

Tom could have wished him to be a little more astonished, a little more pleased, or in some form or other a little more interested in such a great event. But he was perfectly self-possessed; and falling into his favourite solace of whistling, took another turn at the grammar-school, as if nothing at all had happened.

Mr. Pecksniff's horse being regarded in the light of a sacred animal, only to be driven by him, the chief priest of that temple, or by some person distinctly nominated for the time being to that high office by himself, the two young men agreed to walk to Salisbury; and so, when the time came, they set off on foot — which was, after all, a better mode of travelling than in the gig, as the weather was very cold and very dry.

Better! a rare strong, hearty, healthy walk — four statute

miles an hour — preferable to that rumbling, tumbling, j
shaking, scraping, creaking, villanous old gig! Why, th
things will not admit of comparison. It is an insult t
walk to set them side by side. Where is an instance of
having ever circulated a man's blood, unless when, puttin
in danger of his neck, it awakened in his veins and in his
and all along his spine, a tingling heat, much more pe
than agreeable! When did a gig ever sharpen anybody's
and energies, unless it was when the horse bolted, and,
ing madly down a steep hill with a stone wall at the bo
his desperate circumstances suggested to the only gent
left inside some novel and unheard-of mode of droppin
behind! Better than the gig!

The air was cold, Tom; so it was, there was no denyi
but would it have been more genial in the gig? The
smith's fire burned very bright, and leaped up high, as t
it wanted men to warm; but would it have been less tem
looked at from the clammy cushions of a gig? The wind
keenly, nipping the features of the hardy wight who fough
way along; blinding him with his own hair if he had s
of it, and wintry dust if he had n't; stopping his brea
though he had been soused in a cold bath; tearing aw
wrappings-up, and whistling in the very marrow of his b
but it would have done all this a hundred times more fi
to a man in a gig, would n't it? A fig for gigs!

Better than the gig! When were travellers by wheel
hoofs seen with such red-hot cheeks as those? when were
so good-humouredly and merrily bloused? when did
laughter ring upon the air, as they turned them round,
time the stronger gusts came sweeping up; and, facing
again as they passed by, dashed on, in such a glow of
health as nothing could keep pace with, but the high spir
engendered? Better than the gig! Why, here *is* a man
gig coming the same way now. Look at him as he pass
whip into his left hand, chafes his numbed right fingers
granite leg, and beats those marble toes of his upon the
board. Ha, ha, ha! Who would exchange this rapid
of the blood for yonder stagnant misery, though its pace
twenty miles for one!

Better than the gig! No man in a gig could have
interest in the milestones. No man in a gig could see, or

or think, like merry users of their legs. How, as the wind sweeps on, upon these breezy downs, it tracks its flight in darkening ripples on the grass, and smoothest shadows on the hills! Look round and round upon this bare bleak plain, and see even here, upon a winter's day, how beautiful the shadows are! Alas! it is the nature of their kind to be so. The loveliest things in life, Tom, are but shadows; and they come and go, and change and fade away, as rapidly as these!

Another mile, and then begins a fall of snow, making the crow, who skims away so close above the ground to shirk the wind, a blot of ink upon the landscape. But though it drives and drifts against them as they walk, stiffening on their skirts, and freezing in the lashes of their eyes, they would n't have it fall more sparingly, no, not so much as by a single flake, although they had to go a score of miles. And, lo! the towers of the Old Cathedral rise before them, even now! and by and by they come into the sheltered streets, made strangely silent by their white carpet; and so to the Inn for which they are bound; where they present such flushed and burning faces to the cold waiter and are so brimful of vigour, that he almost feels assaulted by their presence; and, having nothing to oppose to the attack (being fresh, or rather stale, from the blazing fire in the coffee-room), is quite put out of his pale countenance.

A famous inn! the hall a very grove of dead game, and dangling joints of mutton; and in one corner an illustrious larder, with glass doors, developing cold fowls and noble joints, and tarts wherein the raspberry jam coyly withdrew itself, as such a precious creature should, behind a latticework of pastry. And behold, on the first floor, at the court-end of the house, in a room with all the window-curtains drawn, a fire piled halfway up the chimney, plates warming before it, wax candles gleaming everywhere, and a table spread for three, with silver and glass enough for thirty, John Westlock — not the old John of Pecksniff's, but a proper gentleman; looking another and a grander person, with the consciousness of being his own master and having money in the bank, and yet in some respects the old John too, for he seized Tom Pinch by both his hands the instant he appeared, and fairly hugged him, in his cordial welcome.

"And this," said John, "is Mr. Chuzzlewit. I am very

glad to see him!"—John had an off-hand manner of his own —so they shook hands warmly, and were friends in no time.

"Stand off a moment, Tom," cried the old pupil, laying one hand on each of Mr. Pinch's shoulders, and holding him out at arm's length. "Let me look at you! Just the same! Not a bit changed!"

"Why, it's not so very long ago, you know," said Tom Pinch, "after all."

"It seems an age to me," cried John; "and so it ought to seem to you, you dog." And then he pushed Tom down into the easiest chair, and clapped him on the back so heartily, and so like his old self in their old bedroom at old Pecksniff's, that it was a toss-up with Tom Pinch whether he should laugh or cry. Laughter won it; and they all three laughed together.

"I have ordered everything for dinner that we used to say we'd have, Tom," observed John Westlock.

"No!" said Tom Pinch, "Have you?"

"Everything. Don't laugh, if you can help it, before the waiters. *I* couldn't when I was ordering it. It's like a dream."

John was wrong there, because nobody ever dreamed such soup as was put upon the table directly afterwards; or such fish; or such side-dishes; or such a top and bottom; or such a course of birds and sweets; or in short anything approaching the reality of that entertainment at ten-and-sixpence a head, exclusive of wines. As to *them*, the man who can dream such iced champagne, such claret, port, or sherry, had better go to bed and stop there.

But perhaps the finest feature of the banquet was that nobody was half so much amazed by everything as John himself, who, in his high delight, was constantly bursting into fits of laughter, and then endeavouring to appear preternaturally solemn, lest the waiters should conceive he was not used to it. Some of the things they brought him to carve were such outrageous practical jokes, though, that it was impossible to stand it; and when Tom Pinch insisted, in spite of the deferential advice of an attendant, not only on breaking down the outer wall of a raised pie with a tablespoon, but on trying to eat it afterwards, John lost all dignity, and sat behind the gorgeous dish-cover at the head of the table, roaring to that extent that he was audible in the kitchen. Nor had he the least objection

o laugh at himself, as he demonstrated when they had all hree gathered round the fire, and the dessert was on the table; t which period, the head waiter inquired with respectful olicitude whether that port, being a light and tawny wine, ras suited to his taste, or whether he would wish to try a ruity port with greater body. To this John gravely answered, hat he was well satisfied with what he had, which he esteemed, as one might say, a pretty tidy vintage; for which the raiter thanked him and withdrew. And then John told his riends, with a broad grin, that he supposed it was all right, ut he did n't know; and went off into a perfect shout.

They were very merry and full of enjoyment the whole time, but not the least pleasant part of the festival was, when they all three sat about the fire, cracking nuts, drinking wine, and talking cheerfully. It happened that Tom Pinch had a word to say to his friend the organist's assistant, and so deserted his warm corner for a few minutes at this season, lest it should grow too late; leaving the other two young men together.

They drank his health in his absence, of course; and John Westlock took that opportunity of saying, that he had never had even a peevish word with Tom during the whole term of their residence in Mr. Pecksniff's house. This naturally led him to dwell upon Tom's character, and to hint that Mr. Pecksniff understood it pretty well. He only hinted this, and very distantly, knowing that it pained Tom Pinch to have that gentleman disparaged, and thinking it would be as well to leave the new pupil to his own discoveries.

"Yes," said Martin. "It 's impossible to like Pinch better han I do, or to do greater justice to his good qualities. He 's he most willing fellow I ever saw."

"He 's rather too willing," observed John, who was quick i observation. "It 's quite a fault in him."

"So it is," said Martin. "Very true. There was a fellow ily a week or so ago — a Mr. Tigg — who borrowed all the oney he had, on a promise to repay it in a few days. It was it half a sovereign, to be sure; but it 's well it was no more, r he 'll never see it again."

"Poor fellow!" said John, who had been very attentive to ese few words. "Perhaps you have not had an opportunity f observing that, in his own pecuniary transactions, Tom 's roud."

"You don't say so! No, I have n't. What do you mean! Won't he borrow!"

John Westlock shook his head.

"That 's very odd," said Martin, setting down his empty glass. "He 's a strange compound, to be sure."

"As to receiving money as a gift," resumed John Westlock, "I think he 'd die first."

"He 's made up of simplicity," said Martin. "Help yourself."

"You, however," pursued John, filling his own glass, and looking at his companion with some curiosity, "who are older than the majority of Mr. Pecksniff's assistants, and have evidently had much more experience, understand him, I have no doubt, and see how liable he is to be imposed upon."

"Certainly," said Martin, stretching out his legs, and holding his wine between his eye and the light, "Mr. Pecksniff knows that too. So do his daughters. Eh!"

John Westlock smiled, but made no answer.

"By the bye," said Martin, "that reminds me. What 's your opinion of Pecksniff! How did he use you! What do you think of him now! — Coolly, you know, when it 's all over!"

"Ask Pinch," returned the old pupil. "He knows what my sentiments used to be upon the subject. They are not changed, I assure you."

"No, no," said Martin, "I 'd rather have them from you."

"But Pinch says they are unjust," urged John with a smile.

"Oh, well! Then I know what course they take beforehand," said Martin; "and, therefore, you can have no delicacy in speaking plainly. Don't mind me, I beg. I don't like him, I tell you frankly. I am with him because it happens from particular circumstances to suit my convenience. I have some ability, I believe, in that way; and the obligation, if any, will most likely be on his side and not mine. At the lowest mark, the balance will be even, and there 'll be no obligation at all. So you may talk to *me*, as if I had no connection with him."

"If you press me to give my opinion" — returned John Westlock.

"Yes, I do," said Martin. "You 'll oblige me."

"I should say," resumed the other, "that he is the most consummate scoundrel on the face of the earth."

"Oh!" said Martin, as coolly as ever. "That's rather strong."

"Not stronger than he deserves," said John; "and if he called upon me to express my opinion of him to his face, I would do so in the very same terms, without the least qualification. His treatment of Pinch is in itself enough to justify them; but when I look back upon the five years I passed in that house, and remember the hypocrisy, the knavery, the meannesses, the false pretences, the lip service of that fellow, and his trading in saintly semblances for the very worst realities; when I remember how often I was the witness of all this, and how often I was made a kind of party to it, by the fact of being there with him for my teacher, I swear to you that I almost despise myself."

Martin drained his glass, and looked at the fire.

"I don't mean to say that is a right feeling," pursued John Westlock, "because it was no fault of mine; and I can quite understand — you, for instance, fully appreciating him, and yet being forced by circumstances to remain there. I tell you simply what my feeling is; and even now, when, as you say, it's all over; and when I have the satisfaction of knowing that he always hated me, and we always quarrelled, and I always told him my mind; even now, I feel sorry that I didn't yield to an impulse I often had, as a boy, of running away from him and going abroad."

"Why abroad?" asked Martin, turning his eyes upon the speaker.

"In search," replied John Westlock, shrugging his shoulders, "of the livelihood I couldn't have earned at home. There would have been something spirited in that. But come — fill your glass and let us forget him."

"As soon as you please," said Martin. "In reference to myself and my connection with him, I have only to repeat what I said before. I have taken my own way with him so far, and shall continue to do so, even more than ever; for the fact is — to tell you the truth — that I believe he looks to me to supply his defects, and couldn't afford to lose me. I had a notion of that in first going there. Your health!"

"Thank you," returned young Westlock. "Yours. And may the new pupil turn out as well as you can desire!"

"What new pupil?"

"The fortunate youth born under an auspicious star," returned John Westlock laughing; "whose parents, or guardians, are destined to be hooked by the advertisement. What! don't you know that he has advertised again?"

"No."

"Oh yes. I read it just before dinner in the old newspaper. I know it to be his; having some reason to remember the style. Hush! Here's Pinch. Strange, is it not, that the more he likes Pecksniff (if he can like him better than he does), the greater reason one has to like *him*? Not a word more, or we shall spoil his whole enjoyment."

Tom entered as the words were spoken, with a radiant smile upon his face; and rubbing his hands, more from a sense of delight than because he was cold (for he had been running fast), sat down in his warm corner again, and was as happy as — as only Tom Pinch could be. There is no other simile that will express his state of mind.

"And so," he said, when he had gazed at his friend for some time in silent pleasure, "so you really are a gentleman at last, John. Well, to be sure!"

"Trying to be, Tom; trying to be," he rejoined good-humouredly. "There is no saying what I may turn out, in time."

"I suppose you wouldn't carry your own box to the mail now," said Tom Pinch smiling: "although you lost it altogether by not taking it."

"Wouldn't I!" retorted John. "That's all you know about it, Pinch. It must be a very heavy box that I wouldn't carry to get away from Pecksniff's, Tom."

"There!" cried Pinch, turning to Martin, "I told you so. The great fault in his character, is his injustice to Pecksniff. You must n't mind a word he says on that subject. His prejudice is most extraordinary."

"The absence of anything like prejudice on Tom's part, you know," said John Westlock, laughing heartily, as he laid his hand on Mr. Pinch's shoulder, "is perfectly wonderful. If one man ever had a profound knowledge of another, and saw him in a true light, and in his own proper colours, Tom has that knowledge of Mr. Pecksniff."

"Why, of course I have," cried Tom. "That's exactly what I have so often said to you. If you knew him as well

as I do — John, I 'd give almost any money to bring that about — you 'd admire, respect, and reverence him. You could n't help it. Oh, how you wounded his feelings when you went away!"

"If I had known whereabout his feelings lay," retorted young Westlock, "I 'd have done my best, Tom, with that end in view, you may depend upon it. But as I could n't wound him in what he has not, and in what he knows nothing of, except in his ability to probe them to the quick in other people, I am afraid I can lay no claim to your compliment."

Mr. Pinch, being unwilling to protract a discussion which might possibly corrupt Martin, forbore to say anything in reply to this speech; but John Westlock, whom nothing short of an iron gag would have silenced when Mr. Pecksniff's merits were once in question, continued notwithstanding.

"*His* feelings! Oh, he 's a tender-hearted man. *His* feelings! Oh, he 's a considerate, conscientious, self-examining, moral vagabond, he is! *His* feelings! Oh! — what 's the matter, Tom!"

Mr. Pinch was by this time erect upon the hearth-rug, buttoning his coat with great energy.

"I can't bear it," said Tom, shaking his head. "No; I really cannot. You must excuse me, John. I have a great esteem and friendship for you; I love you very much; and have been perfectly charmed and overjoyed to-day to find you just the same as ever; but I cannot listen to this."

"Why, it 's my old way, Tom; and you say yourself that you are glad to find me unchanged."

"Not in this respect," said Tom Pinch. "You must excuse me, John. I cannot, really; I will not. It 's very wrong; you should be more guarded in your expressions. It was bad enough when you and I used to be alone together, but under existing circumstances, I can't endure it, really. No. I cannot, indeed."

"You are quite right!" exclaimed the other, exchanging looks with Martin; "and I am quite wrong, Tom. I don't know how the deuce we fell on this unlucky theme. I beg your pardon with all my heart."

"You have a free and manly temper, I know," said Pinch, "and therefore, your being so ungenerous in this one solitary instance only grieves me the more. It 's not my pardon you

have to ask, John. You have done *me* nothing but kindnesses."

"Well! Pecksniff's pardon, then," said young Westlock. "Anything, Tom, or anybody. Pecksniff's pardon — will that do? Here! let us drink Pecksniff's health!"

"Thank you," cried Tom, shaking hands with him eagerly, and filling a bumper. "Thank you; I 'll drink it with all my heart, John. Mr. Pecksniff's health, and prosperity to him!"

John Westlock echoed the sentiment, or nearly so; for he drank Mr. Pecksniff's health, and Something to him — but what, was not quite audible. The general unanimity being then completely restored, they drew their chairs closer round the fire, and conversed in perfect harmony and enjoyment until bed-time.

No slight circumstance, perhaps, could have better illustrated the difference of character between John Westlock and Martin Chuzzlewit, than the manner in which each of the young men contemplated Tom Pinch, after the little rupture just described. There was a certain amount of jocularity in the looks of both, no doubt, but there all resemblance ceased. The old pupil could not do enough to show Tom how cordially he felt towards him, and his friendly regard seemed of a graver and more thoughtful kind than before. The new one, on the other hand, had no impulse but to laugh at the recollection of Tom's extreme absurdity; and mingled with his amusement there was something slighting and contemptuous, indicative, as it appeared, of his opinion that Mr. Pinch was much too far gone in simplicity to be admitted as the friend, on serious and equal terms, of any rational man.

John Westlock, who did nothing by halves, if he could help it, had provided beds for his two guests in the hotel; and after a very happy evening, they retired. Mr. Pinch was sitting on the side of his bed with his cravat and shoes off, ruminating on the manifold good qualities of his old friend, when he was interrupted by a knock at his chamber door, and the voice of John himself.

"You 're not asleep yet, are you, Tom?"

"Bless you, no! not I. I was thinking of you," replied Tom, opening the door. "Come in."

"I am not going to detain you," said John; "but I have forgotten all the evening a little commission I took upon

myself; and I am afraid I may forget it again, if I fail to discharge it at once. You know a Mr. Tigg, Tom, I believe?"

"Tigg!" cried Tom. "Tigg! The gentleman who borrowed some money of me?"

"Exactly," said John Westlock. "He begged me to present his compliments, and to return it with many thanks. Here it is. I suppose it's a good one, but he is rather a doubtful kind of customer, Tom."

Mr. Pinch received the little piece of gold, with a face whose brightness might have shamed the metal; and said he had no fear about that. He was glad, he added, to find Mr. Tigg so prompt and honourable in his dealings; very glad.

"Why, to tell you the truth, Tom," replied his friend, "he is not always so. If you'll take my advice, you'll avoid him as much as you can, in the event of your encountering him again. And by no means, Tom, — pray bear this in mind, for I am very serious, — by no means lend him money any more."

"Ay, ay!" said Tom, with his eyes wide open.

"He is very far from being a reputable acquaintance," returned young Westlock; "and the more you let him know you think so, the better for you, Tom."

"I say, John," quoth Mr. Pinch, as his countenance fell, and he shook his head in a dejected manner, "I hope you are not getting into bad company."

"No, no," he replied laughing. "Don't be uneasy on that score."

"Oh, but I *am* uneasy," said Tom Pinch; "I can't help it, when I hear you talking in that way. If Mr. Tigg is what you describe him to be, you have no business to know him, John. You may laugh, but I don't consider it by any means a laughing matter, I assure you."

"No, no," returned his friend, composing his features. "Quite right. It is not, certainly."

"You know, John," said Mr. Pinch, "your very good-nature and kindness of heart make you thoughtless; and you can't be too careful on such a point as this. Upon my word, if I thought you were falling among bad companions, I should be quite wretched, for I know how difficult you would find it to shake them off. I would much rather have lost this money, John, than I would have had it back again on such terms."

"I tell you, my dear good old fellow," cried his friend,

shaking him to and fro with both hands, and smiling at h
with a cheerful, open countenance, that would have carr
conviction to a mind much more suspicious than Tom's; "
tell you there is no danger."

"Well!" cried Tom, "I am glad to hear it; I am overjoy
to hear it. I am sure there is not, when you say so in th
manner. You won't take it ill, John, that I said what I d
just now!"

"Ill!" said the other, giving his hand a hearty squee
"why, what do you think I am made of? Mr. Tigg and I a
not on such an intimate footing that you need be at all uneas
I give you my solemn assurance of that, Tom. You are qu
comfortable now?"

"Quite," said Tom.

"Then once more, good night!"

"Good night!" cried Tom; "and such pleasant dreams
you, as should attend the sleep of the best fellow in t
world!"

"—Except Pecksniff," said his friend, stopping at the do
for a moment, and looking gaily back.

"Except Pecksniff," answered Tom, with great gravity, "
course."

And thus they parted for the night; John Westlock fall
light-heartedness and good-humour; and poor Tom Pinch qu
satisfied; though still, as he turned over on his side in bed,
muttered to himself, "I really do wish, for all that, thoug
that he was n't acquainted with Mr. Tigg!"

They breakfasted together very early next morning, for t
two young men desired to get back again in good season, a
John Westlock was to return to London by the coach that da
As he had some hours to spare, he bore them company f
three or four miles on their walk, and only parted from th
at last in sheer necessity. The parting was an unusual
hearty one, not only as between him and Tom Pinch, but
the side of Martin also, who had found in the old pupil a ve
different sort of person from the milksop he had prepared hi
self to expect.

Young Westlock stopped upon a rising ground, when he h
gone a little distance, and looked back. They were walki
at a brisk pace, and Tom appeared to be talking earnestl
Martin had taken off his great-coat, the wind being now behi

hem, and carried it upon his arm. As he looked, he saw 'om relieve him of it, after a faint resistance, and, throwing it pon his own, incumber himself with the weight of both. 'his trivial incident impressed the old pupil mightily, for he tood there, gazing after them, until they were hidden from is view, when he shook his head, as if he were troubled by ome uneasy reflection, and thoughtfully retraced his steps to alisbury.

In the mean time, Martin and Tom pursued their way, until hey halted, safe and sound, at Mr. Pecksniff's house, where a rief epistle from that good gentleman to Mr. Pinch, announced he family's return by that night's coach. As it would pass he corner of the lane at about six o'clock in the morning, Mr. 'ecksniff requested that the gig might be in waiting at the inger-post about that time, together with a cart for the lug- age. And to the end that he might be received with the reater honour, the young men agreed to rise early, and be ipon the spot themselves.

It was the least cheerful day they had yet passed together. Martin was out of spirits and out of humour, and took every pportunity of comparing his condition and prospects with hose of young Westlock, much to his own disadvantage lways. This mood of his depressed Tom; and neither that norning's parting, nor yesterday's dinner, helped to mend the natter. So the hours dragged on heavily enough; and they were glad to go to bed early.

They were not quite so glad to get up again at half-past four o'clock, in all the shivering discomfort of a dark winter's morning; but they turned out punctually, and were at the finger-post full half an hour before the appointed time. It was not by any means a lively morning, for the sky was black and cloudy, and it rained hard; but Martin said there was some satisfaction in seeing that brute of a horse (by this, he meant Mr. Pecksniff's Arab steed) getting very wet; and that he rejoiced, on his account, that it rained so fast. From this it may be inferred that Martin's spirits had not improved, as indeed they had not; for while he and Mr. Pinch stood wait- ing under a hedge, looking at the rain, the gig, the cart, and its reeking driver, he did nothing but grumble; and, but that it is indispensable to any dispute that there should be two parties to it, he would certainly have picked a quarrel with Tom.

gth the noise of wheels was faintly audible in
and presently the coach came splashing through
mire, with one miserable outside passenger crou
ong wet straw, under a saturated umbrella; and
, guard, and horses, in a fellowship of drip
ness. Immediately on its stopping, Mr. Pecksniff
window-glass and hailed Tom Pinch.
me, Mr. Pinch! is it possible that you are out
inclement morning?"
sir," cried Tom, advancing eagerly, "Mr. Chuzz
ig —"
" said Mr. Pecksniff, looking, not so much at Mr
e spot on which he stood. "Oh! Indeed! Do
our to see to the trunks, if you please, Mr. Pinch."
n Mr. Pecksniff descended, and helped his daughters
; but neither he nor the young ladies took the slight
notice of Martin, who had advanced to offer his assistance,
was repulsed by Mr. Pecksniff's standing immediately be
his person, with his back towards him. In the same man
and in profound silence, Mr. Pecksniff handed his daugh
into the gig, and, following himself and taking the reins, d
off home.

Lost in astonishment, Martin stood staring at the coach,
when the coach had driven away, at Mr. Pinch and the
gage, until the cart moved off, too; when he said to Tom -

"Now will you have the goodness to tell me what this
tends?"

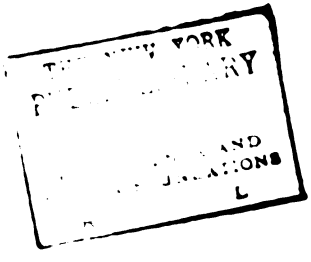
"What?" asked Tom.

"This fellow's behaviour — Mr. Pecksniff's, I mean
saw it?"

"No. Indeed I did not," cried Tom. "I was busy
the trunks."

"It is no matter," said Martin. "Come! Let us m
haste back." And without another word he started off at
a pace that Tom had some difficulty in keeping up with him

He had no care where he went, but walked through
heaps of mud and little pools of water with the utmost
ence, looking straight before him, and sometimes laughing
a strange manner within himself. Tom felt that anything
could say would only render him the more obstinate, and th
f re trusted to Mr. Pecksniff's manner when they reached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ause to remove the mistaken impression under which he felt nvinced so great a favourite as the new pupil must unquesonably be labouring. But he was not a little amazed himself, hen they did reach it, and entered the parlour where Mr. ecksniff was sitting alone before the fire, drinking some hot a, to find that instead of taking favourable notice of his lative, and keeping him, Mr. Pinch, in the background, he id exactly the reverse, and was so lavish in his attentions to om that Tom was thoroughly confounded.

"Take some tea, Mr. Pinch — take some tea," said Pecksniff, stirring the fire. "You must be very cold and damp. ray take some tea, and come into a warm place, Mr. Pinch."

Tom saw that Martin looked at Mr. Pecksniff as though he ould have easily found it in his heart to give *him* an invitaion to a very warm place; but he was quite silent, and, standng opposite that gentleman at the table, regarded him attenively.

"Take a chair, Mr. Pinch," said Pecksniff. "Take a chair, f you please. How have things gone on in our absence, Mr. Pinch?"

"You — you will be very much pleased with the grammarchool, sir," said Tom. "It 's nearly finished."

"If you will have the goodness, Mr. Pinch," said Pecksniff, waving his hand and smiling, "we will not discuss anything connected with that question at present. What have *you* been doing, Thomas, humph?"

Mr. Pinch looked from master to pupil, and from pupil to master, and was so perplexed and dismayed that he wanted presence of mind to answer the question. In this awkward nterval, Mr. Pecksniff (who was perfectly conscious of Marin's gaze, though he had never once glanced towards him) oked the fire very much, and, when he could n't do that any nore, drank tea assiduously.

"Now, Mr. Pecksniff," said Martin at last, in a very quiet oice, "if you have sufficiently refreshed and recovered yourelf, I shall be glad to hear what you mean by this treatment f me."

"And what," said Mr. Pecksniff, turning his eyes on Tom inch, even more placidly and gently than before, "what have ou been doing, Thomas, humph?"

When he had repeated this inquiry, he looked round the

walls of the room as if he were curious to see whether any nails had been left there by accident in former times.

Tom was almost at his wit's end what to say between the two, and had already made a gesture as if he would call Mr. Pecksniff's attention to the gentleman who had last addressed him, when Martin saved him further trouble by doing so himself.

"Mr. Pecksniff," he said, softly rapping the table twice or thrice, and moving a step or two nearer, so that he could have touched him with his hand; "you heard what I said just now. Do me the favour to reply, if you please. I ask you"—he raised his voice a little here—"what you mean by this?"

"I will talk to you, sir," said Mr. Pecksniff in a severe voice, as he looked at him for the first time, "presently."

"You are very obliging," returned Martin; "presently will not do. I must trouble you to talk to me at once."

Mr. Pecksniff made a feint of being deeply interested in his pocket-book, but it shook in his hands; he trembled so.

"Now," retorted Martin, rapping the table again. "Now. Presently will not do. Now!"

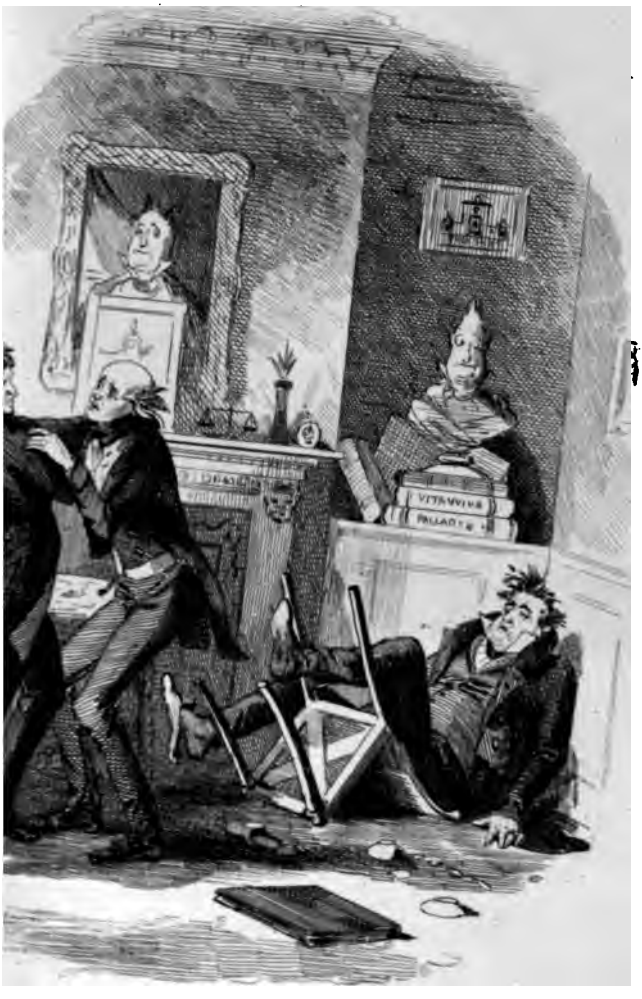
"Do you threaten me, sir?" cried Mr. Pecksniff.

Martin looked at him, and made no answer; but a curious observer might have detected an ominous twitching at his mouth, and perhaps an involuntary attraction of his right hand in the direction of Mr. Pecksniff's cravat.

"I lament to be obliged to say, sir," resumed Mr. Pecksniff, "that it would be quite in keeping with your character if you did threaten me. You have deceived me. You have imposed upon a nature which you knew to be confiding and unsuspicious. You have obtained admission, sir," said Mr. Pecksniff, rising, "to this house, on perverted statements, and on false pretences."

"Go on," said Martin, with a scornful smile. "I understand you now. What more!"

"Thus much more, sir," cried Mr. Pecksniff, trembling from head to foot, and trying to rub his hands, as though he were only cold. "Thus much more, if you force me to publish your shame before a third party, which I was unwilling and indisposed to do. This lowly roof, sir, must not be contaminated by the presence of one who has deceived, and cruelly deceived, an honourable, beloved, venerated, and venerable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do, and as he knows I do. *He* renounce me! O
on the Renouncer, Pinch, and be the wiser for
ction!"

pointed at him as he spoke with unutterable contem
ing his hat upon his head, walked from the room
the house. He went so rapidly that he was already
village, when he heard Tom Pinch calling breathle
him in the distance.

Well! what now!" he said, when Tom came up.

Dear, dear!" cried Tom, "are you going!"

Going!" he echoed. "Going!"

I did n't so much mean that, as were you going no
— in this bad weather — on foot — without your cl
with no money!" cried Tom.

"Yes," he answered sternly, "I am."

"And where!" cried Tom. "Oh where will you go!"

"I don't know," he said. — "Yes I do. I 'll go to A
ica!"

"No, no," cried Tom, in a kind of agony. "Don't
there. Pray don't! Think better of it. Don't be so d
fully regardless of yourself. Don't go to America'"

"My mind is made up," he said. "Your friend was r
I 'll go to America. God bless you, Pinch!"

"Take this!" cried Tom, pressing a book upon him in
agitation. "I must make haste back, and can't say anyth
I would. Heaven be with you. Look at the leaf I h
turned down. Good-bye, good-bye!"

The simple fellow wring him by the hand, with tears s
ing down his cheeks; and they parted hurriedly upon t
separate ways.

## CHAPTER XIII

WING WHAT BECAME OF MARTIN, AND HIS DESPERATE RE-LVE, AFTER HE LEFT MR. PECKSNIFF'S HOUSE: WHAT PERSONS E ENCOUNTERED: WHAT ANXIETIES HE SUFFERED: AND WHAT WS HE HEARD.

ARRYING Tom Pinch's book quite unconsciously under his , and not even buttoning his coat as a protection against heavy rain, Martin went doggedly forward at the same k pace, until he had passed the finger-post, and was on high-road to London. He slackened very little in his d even then, but he began to think, and look about him, to disengage his senses from the coil of angry passions ch hitherto had held them prisoner.

t must be confessed that, at that moment, he had no very eable employment either for his moral or his physical per-tions. The day was dawning from a patch of watery light he east, and sullen clouds came driving up before it, from ch the rain descended in a thick, wet mist. It streamed n every twig and bramble in the hedge, made little gullies the path, ran down a hundred channels in the road, and ched innumerable holes into the face of every pond and er. It fell with an oozy, slushy sound among the grass, made a muddy kennel of every furrow in the ploughed ls. No living creature was anywhere to be seen. The pect could hardly have been more desolate if animated re had been dissolved in water, and poured down upon the h again in that form.

he range of view within the solitary traveller was quite heerless as the scene without. Friendless and penniless; ised to the last degree; deeply wounded in his pride and love; full of independent schemes, and perfectly destitute ny means of realising them; his most vindictive enemy ıt have been satisfied with the extent of his troubles. To

add to his other miseries, he was by this time sensible of being wet to the skin, and cold at his very heart.

In this deplorable condition, he remembered Mr. Pinch's book: more because it was rather troublesome to carry than from any hope of being comforted by that parting gift. He looked at the dingy lettering on the back, and finding it to be an odd volume of the "Bachelor of Salamanca," in the French tongue, cursed Tom Pinch's folly, twenty times. He was on the point of throwing it away, in his ill-humour and vexation, when he bethought himself that Tom had referred him to a leaf, turned down; and opening it at that place, that he might have additional cause of complaint against him for supposing that any cold scrap of the Bachelor's wisdom could cheer him in such circumstances, found—

Well, well! not much, but Tom's all. The half-sovereign. He had wrapped it hastily in a piece of paper, and pinned it to the leaf. These words were scrawled in pencil on the inside: "I don't want it, indeed. I should not know what to do with it if I had it."

There are some falsehoods, Tom, on which men mount, as on bright wings, towards Heaven. There are some truths, cold, bitter, taunting truths, wherein your worldly scholars are very apt and punctual, which bind men down to earth with leaden chains. Who would not rather have to fan him, in his dying hour, the lightest feather of a falsehood such as thine, than all the quills that have been plucked from the sharp porcupine, reproachful truth, since time began!

Martin felt keenly for himself, and he felt this good deed of Tom's keenly. After a few minutes it had the effect of raising his spirits, and reminding him that he was not altogether destitute, as he had left a fair stock of clothes behind him, and wore a gold hunting-watch in his pocket. He found a curious gratification, too, in thinking what a winning fellow he must be to have made such an impression on Tom: and in reflecting how superior he was to Tom: and how much more likely to make his way in the world. Animated by these thoughts, and strengthened in his design of endeavouring to push his fortune in another country, he resolved to get to London as a rallying-point in the best way he could, and to lose no time about it.

He was ten good miles from the village made illustrious by being the abiding place of Mr. Pecksniff, when he stopped to

breakfast at a little road-side alehouse; and resting upon a high-backed settle before the fire, pulled off his coat, and hung it before the cheerful blaze, to dry. It was a very different place from the last tavern in which he had regaled, boasting no greater extent of accommodation than the brick-floored kitchen yielded; but the mind so soon accommodates itself to the necessities of the body that this poor wagoners' house-of-call, which he would have despised yesterday, became now quite a choice hotel; while his dish of eggs and bacon and his mug of beer were not by any means the coarse fare he had supposed, but fully bore out the inscription on the window-shutter, which proclaimed those viands to be "Good entertainment for travellers."

He pushed away his empty plate; and with a second mug upon the hearth before him, looked thoughtfully at the fire until his eyes ached. Then he looked at the highly coloured Scripture pieces on the walls, in little black frames like common shaving-glasses, and saw how the Wise Men (with a strong family likeness among them) worshipped in a pink manger; and how the Prodigal Son came home in red rags to a purple father, and already feasted his imagination on a sea-green calf. Then he glanced through the window at the falling rain, coming down aslant upon the sign-post over against the house, and overflowing the horse-trough; and then he looked at the fire again, and seemed to descry a doubly distant London, retreating among the fragments of the burning wood.

He had repeated this process in just the same order many times, as if it were a matter of necessity, when the sound of wheels called his attention to the window, out of its regular turn; and there he beheld a kind of light van drawn by four horses, and laden, as well as he could see (for it was covered in), with corn and straw. The driver, who was alone, stopped at the door to water his team, and presently came, stamping and shaking the wet off his hat and coat, into the room where Martin sat.

He was a red-faced, burly young fellow; smart in his way, and with a good-humoured countenance. As he advanced towards the fire, he touched his shining forehead with the forefinger of his stiff leather glove, by way of salutation; and said (rather unnecessarily) that it was an uncommon wet day.

"Very wet," said Martin.

know as ever I see a wetter."

er felt one," said Martin.

river glanced at Martin's soiled dress, and his dam
res, and his coat hung up to dry; and said, after a
s he warmed his hands:—

have been caught in it, sir?"

" was the short reply.

riding, maybe?" said the driver.

ould have been, if I owned a horse; but I don't,"
Martin.

t 's bad," said the driver.

d may be worse," said Martin.

, the driver said "That 's bad," not so much becaus
did n't own a horse as because he said he did n't wit
reckless desperation of his mood and circumstances, and
a great deal to be inferred. Martin put his hands in
his pockets and whistled, when he had retorted on the driver;
thus giving him to understand that he did n't care a pin for
Fortune; that he was above pretending to be her favourite
when he was not; and that he snapped his fingers at her, the
driver, and everybody else.

The driver looked at him stealthily for a minute or so, and
in the pauses of his warming, whistled too. At length he
asked, as he pointed his thumb towards the road: —

"Up or down?"

"Which *is* up?" said Martin.

"London, of course," said the driver.

"Up, then," said Martin. He tossed his head in a careless
manner afterwards, as if he would have added, "Now you
know all about it," put his hands deeper into his pockets,
changed his tune, and whistled a little louder.

"I 'm going up," observed the driver; "Hounslow, ten
miles this side London."

"Are you?" cried Martin, stopping short and looking at him.

The driver sprinkled the fire with his wet hat until it hissed
again, and answered, Ay, to be sure he was.

"Why, then," said Martin, "I 'll be plain with you. You
may suppose from my dress that I have money to spare. I
have not. All I can afford for coach-hire is a crown, for I have
but two. If you can take me for that, and my waistcoat, or
this silk handkerchief, do. If you can't, leave it alone."

"Short and sweet," remarked the driver.

"You want more?" said Martin. "Then I have n't got more, and I can't get it, so there 's an end of that." Whereupon he began to whistle again.

"I did n't say I wanted more, did I?" asked the driver, with something like indignation.

"You did n't say my offer was enough," rejoined Martin.

"Why how could I, when you would n't let me? In regard to the waistcoat, I would n't have a man's waistcoat, much less a gentleman's waistcoat, on my mind, for no consideration; but the silk handkerchief 's another thing; and if you was satisfied when we got to Hounslow, I should n't object to that as a gift."

"Is it a bargain, then?" said Martin.

"Yes, it is," returned the other.

"Then finish this beer," said Martin, handing him the mug, and pulling on his coat with great alacrity; "and let us be off as soon as you like."

In two minutes more he had paid his bill, which amounted to a shilling; was lying at full length on a truss of straw, high and dry at the top of the van, with the tilt a little open in front for the convenience of talking to his new friend; and was moving along in the right direction with a most satisfactory and encouraging briskness.

The driver's name, as he soon informed Martin, was William Simmons, better known as Bill; and his spruce appearance was sufficiently explained by his connection with a large stage-coaching establishment at Hounslow, whither he was conveying his load from a farm belonging to the concern in Wiltshire. He was frequently up and down the road on such errands, he said, and to look after the sick and rest horses, of which animals he had much to relate that occupied a long time in the telling. He aspired to the dignity of the regular box, and expected an appointment on the first vacancy. He was musical besides, and had a little key-bugle in his pocket, on which, whenever the conversation flagged, he played the first part of a great many tunes, and regularly broke down in the second.

"Ah!" said Bill, with a sigh, as he drew the back of his hand across his lips, and put this instrument in his pocket, after screwing off the mouth-piece to drain it; "Lummy Ned the Light Salisbury, *he* was the one for musical talents.

He *was* a guard. What you may call a Guard'an Angel, was Ned."

"Is he dead?" asked Martin.

"Dead!" replied the other, with a contemptuous emphasis. "Not he. You won't catch Ned a dying easy. No, no. He knows better than that."

"You spoke of him in the past tense," observed Martin, "so I supposed he was no more."

"He 's no more in England," said Bill, "if that 's what you mean. He went to the U-nited States."

"Did he?" asked Martin, with sudden interest. "When?"

"Five year ago, or thenabout," said Bill. "He had set up in the public line here, and could n't meet his engagements, so he cut off to Liverpool one day without saying anything about it, and went and shipped himself for the U-nited States."

"Well?" said Martin.

"Well! as he landed there without a penny to bless himself with, of course they wos very glad to see him in the U-nited States."

"What do you mean?" asked Martin, with some scorn.

"What do I mean?" said Bill. "Why, *that*. All men are alike in the U-nited States, ain't they? It makes no odds whether a man has a thousand pound, or nothing, there—particular in New York, I 'm told, where Ned landed."

"New York, was it?" asked Martin thoughtfully.

"Yes," said Bill. "New York. I know that, because he sent word home that it brought Old York to his mind, quite wivid, in consequence of being so exactly unlike it in every respect. I don't understand wot particular business Ned turned his mind to, when he got there; but he wrote home that him and his friends was always a singing Ale Columbia, and blowing up the President, so I suppose it was something in the public line, or free-and-easy way, again. Anyhow, he made his fortune."

"No!" cried Martin.

"Yes, he did," said Bill. "I know that, because he lost it all, the day after, in six-and-twenty banks as broke. He settled a lot of the notes on his father, when it was ascertained that they was really stopped, and sent 'em over with a dutiful letter. I know that, because they was shown down our yard for the old gentleman's benefit, that he might treat himself with tobacco in the workus."

"He was a foolish fellow not to take care of his money when e had it," said Martin indignantly.

"There you 're right," said Bill, "especially as it was all in aper, and he might have took care of it so very easy, by fold- ng it up in a small parcel."

Martin said nothing in reply, but, soon afterwards fell sleep, and remained so for an hour or more. When he awoke, inding it had ceased to rain, he took his seat beside the driver, nd asked him several questions, — as how long had the fortu- nate guard of the Light Salisbury been in crossing the Atlan- ic; at what time of the year had he sailed; what was the ame of the ship in which he made the voyage; how much had e paid for passage-money; did he suffer greatly from sea- ickness, and so forth. But on these points of detail, his riend was possessed of little or no information; either answer- ng obviously at random, or acknowledging that he had never eard, or had forgotten; nor, although he returned to the harge very often, could he obtain any useful intelligence on hese essential particulars.

They jogged on all day, and stopped so often — now to efresh, now to change their team of horses, now to exchange r bring away a set of harness, now on one point of business, nd now upon another, connected with the coaching on that ine of road — that it was midnight when they reached Houns- low. A little short of the stables for which the van was ound, Martin got down, paid his crown, and forced his silk andkerchief upon his honest friend, notwithstanding the many rotestations that he did n't wish to deprive him of it, with hich he tried to give the lie to his longing looks. That done, hey parted company; and when the van had driven into its wn yard and the gates were closed, Martin stood in the dark treet, with a pretty strong sense of being shut out, alone, pon the dreary world, without the key of it.

But in this moment of despondency, and often afterwards, he recollection of Mr. Pecksniff operated as a cordial to him; wakening in his breast an indignation that was very whole- me in nerving him to obstinate endurance. Under the influ- ce of this fiery dram, he started off for London without more lo. Arriving there in the middle of the night, and not nowing where to find a tavern open, he was fain to stroll out the streets and market-places until morning.

and himself, about an hour before dawn, in the
regions of the Adelphi; and addressing himself to a
fur cap who was taking down the shutters of an ol
ic-house, informed him that he was a stranger, an
ed if he could have a bed there. It happened, by
, that he could. Though none of the goodliest, i
ably clean, and Martin felt very glad and grateful wh
pt into it, for warmth, rest, and forgetfulness.

It was quite late in the afternoon when he awoke; a
time he had washed and dressed, and broken his f
growing dusk again. This was all the better, for i
a matter of absolute necessity that he should part wit
-tch to some obliging pawnbroker. He would have w
il after dark for this purpose, though it had been the
day in the year, and he had begun it without a breakfa
He passed more Golden Balls than all the jugglers in E
have juggled with, in the course of their united performa
before he could determine in favour of any particular
where those symbols were displayed. In the end, he
back to one of the first he had seen, and entering by a
door in a court, where the three balls, with the legend "N
Lent," were repeated in a ghastly transparency, passed in
of a series of little closets, or private boxes, erected f
accommodation of the more bashful and uninitiated cust
He bolted himself in; pulled out his watch, and laid it
counter.

"Upon my life and soul!" said a low voice in the nex
to the shopman who was in treaty with him, "you must
it more; you must make it a trifle more, you must in
You must dispense with one half-quarter of an ounce in w
ing out your pound of flesh, my best of friends, and ma
two-and-six."

Martin drew back involuntarily, for he knew the voice at

"You're always full of your chaff," said the shopman,
ing up the article (which looked like a shirt) quite as a t
of course, and nibbling his pen upon the counter.

"I shall never be full of my wheat," said Mr Ta
long as I come here. Ha, ha! Not bad! Make it tw
six, my dear friend, positively for this occasion only. I
crown is a delightful coin — two-and-six! Going at tw
six! For the last time, at two-and-six!"

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"It'll never be the last time till it's quite worn out," joined the shopman. "It's grown yellow in the service as is."

"Its master has grown yellow in the service, if you mean hat, my friend," said Mr. Tigg; "in the patriotic service of an ngrateful country. You are making it two-and-six, I think?"

"I'm making it," returned the shopman, "what it always as been — two shillings. Same name as usual, I suppose?"

"Still the same name," said Mr. Tigg; "my claim to the ormant peerage not being yet established by the House of ords."

"The old address?"

"Not at all," said Mr. Tigg; "I have removed my town tablishment from thirty-eight, Mayfair, to number fifteen ndred and forty-two, Park Lane."

"Come, I'm not going to put down that, you know," said he shopman, with a grin.

"You may put down what you please, my friend," quoth Mr. Tigg. "The fact is still the same. The apartments for he under-butler and the fifth footman being of a most conounded low and vulgar kind at thirty-eight, Mayfair, I have een compelled, in my regard for the feelings which do them o much honour, to take on lease, for seven, fourteen, or wenty-one years, renewable at the option of the tenant, the legant and commodious family mansion, number fifteen hunlred and forty two, Park Lane. Make it two-and-six, and ome and see me!"

The shopman was so highly entertained by this piece of umour, that Mr. Tigg himself could not repress some little how of exultation. It vented itself, in part, in a desire to ee how the occupant of the next box received his pleasantry; o ascertain which, he glanced round the partition, and immediately, by the gaslight, recognised Martin.

"I wish I may die," said Mr. Tigg, stretching out his body o far that his head was as much in Martin's little cell as Mar-n's own head was, "but this is one of the most tremendous eetings in Ancient or Modern History! How are you? What is the news from the agricultural districts? How are ur friends the P.'s? Ha, ha! David, pay particular attenion to this gentleman, immediately, as a friend of mine, I eg."

Please to give me the most you can for this,"
n, handing the watch to the shopman, "I want m
"
e wants money sorely!" cried Mr. Tigg with exc
thy. "David, you will have the goodness to do
utmost for my friend, who wants money sorely.
deal with my friend as if he were myself. A gold
atch, David, engine-turned, capped and jewelled in
, escape movement, horizontal lever, and warrante
orm correctly, upon my personal reputation, who
erved it narrowly for many years, under the most t
umstances —" Here he winked at Martin, that he
lerstand this recommendation would have an immense
n the shopman: "What do you say, David, to my fri
very particular to deserve my custom and recommend
David."

"I can lend you three pound on this, if you like," sa
shopman to Martin confidentially. "It 's very old-fashi
I could n't say more."

"And devilish handsome too," cried Mr. Tigg. "
twelve-six for the watch, and seven-and-six for pers
I am gratified: it may be weakness, but I am. Three
will do. We take it. The name of my friend is Sm
Chicken Smivey, of Holborn, twenty-six and a half B
Here he winked at Martin again, to apprise him that
forms and ceremonies prescribed by law were now
with, and nothing remained but the receipt of the m

In point of fact, this proved to be the case, for Martin
had no resource but to take what was offered him, a
acquiescence by a nod of his head, and presently
with the cash in his pocket. He was joined in the
Mr. Tigg, who warmly congratulated him, as he took h
and accompanied him into the street, on the successful
the negotiation.

"As for my part in the same," said Mr. Tigg, "don't
them it. Don't compliment me, for I can't bear it!"

"I have no such intention, I assure you," retorted M
releasing his arm, and stopping.

"You oblige me very much," said Mr. Tigg. "I
you."

"Now, sir," observed Martin, biting his lips, "this is a

, and we can easily find different ways in it. If you will me which is your way, I will take another."

r. Tigg was about to speak, but Martin interposed: —

: need scarcely tell you, after what you have just seen, I have nothing to bestow upon your friend, Mr. Slyme. it is quite as unnecessary for me to tell you that I don't e the honour of your company."

Stop!" cried Mr. Tigg, holding out his hand. "Hold! e is a most remarkably long-headed, flowing-bearded, and archal proverb, which observes that it is the duty of a to be just before he is generous. Be just now, and you e generous presently. Do not confuse me with the man e. Do not distinguish the man Slyme as a friend of , for he is no such thing. I have been compelled, sir, to lon the party whom you call Slyme. I have no know- of the party whom you call Slyme. I am, sir," said Mr. striking himself upon the breast, "a premium tulip, of y different growth and cultivation from the cabbage Slyme,

t matters very little to me," said Martin coolly, "whether have set up as a vagabond on your own account, or are trading on behalf of Mr. Slyme. I wish to hold no cor- ndence with you. In the devil's name, man," said Mar- scarcely able despite his vexation to repress a smile, as Tigg stood leaning his back against the shutters of a shop ow adjusting his hair with great composure, "will you go ray or other?"

You will allow me to remind you, sir," said Mr. Tigg, sudden dignity, "that you — not I — that you — I say atically, *you* — have reduced the proceedings of this even- a cold and distant matter of business, when I was dis- to place them on a friendly footing. It being made a r of business, sir, I beg to say that I expect a trifle h I shall bestow in charity) as commission upon the iary advance, in which I have rendered you my humble es. After the terms in which you have addressed me, concluded Mr. Tigg, "you will not insult me, if you e, by offering more than half a crown."

rtin drew that piece of money from his pocket, and tossed wards him. Mr. Tigg caught it, looked at it to assure lf of its goodness, spun it in the air after the manner of

nd buttoned it up. Finally, he raised his ha
from his head, with a military air, and, after
a moment with deep gravity, as to decide in which
he should go, and to what Earl or Marquis
is he should give the preference in his next call, stu
in his skirt-pockets and swaggered round the co
tin took the directly opposite course; and so, to his
nt, they parted company.

was with a bitter sense of humiliation that he co
and again, the mischance of having encountered this
he pawnbroker's shop. The only comfort he had in
llection was Mr. Tigg's voluntary avowal of a sepa
een himself and Slyme, that would at least preven
umstances (so Martin argued) from being known to
mber of his family, the bare possibility of which filled
with shame and wounded pride. Abstractedly, there
greater reason, perhaps, for supposing any declaration of
Tigg's to be false than for attaching the least credence t
but remembering the terms on which the intimacy between
gentleman and his bosom friend had subsisted, and the
probability of Mr. Tigg's having established an interes
business of his own on Mr. Slyme's connection, it had a
sonable appearance of probability; at all events, Martin h
so, and that went a long way.

His first step, now that he had a supply of ready m
his present necessities, was to retain his bed at the pa
house until further notice, and to write a formal note to
Pinch (for he knew Pecksniff would see it respecting
his clothes forwarded to London by coach, with a direct
be left at the office until called for. These measures take
passed the interval before the box arrived — three days
making inquiries relative to American vessels, at the
of various shipping-agents in the city, and in lounging
the docks and wharves, with the faint hope of stumbling
some engagement for the voyage, as clerk or supercarg
custodian of something or somebody, which would enable
to procure a free passage. But finding soon that no
means of employment were likely to present themselves,
dreading the consequences of delay, he drew up a short a
tisement, stating what he wanted and inserted it in the lea
newspapers. Pending the receipt of the twenty or t

answers which he vaguely expected, he reduced his wardrobe to the narrowest limits consistent with decent respectability, and carried the overplus at different times to the pawnbroker's shop, for conversion into money.

And it was strange, very strange even to himself, to find how by quick though almost imperceptible degrees he lost his delicacy and self-respect, and gradually came to do that as a matter of course without the least compunction, which but a few short days before had galled him to the quick. The first time he visited the pawnbroker's, he felt on his way there as if every person whom he passed suspected whither he was going; and on his way back again, as if the whole human tide he stemmed knew well where he had come from. When did he care to think of their discernment now! In his first wanderings up and down the weary streets, he counterfeited the walk of one who had an object in his view; but, soon there came upon him the sauntering, slipshod gait of listless idleness, and the lounging at street-corners, and plucking and biting of stray bits of straw, and strolling up and down the same place, and looking into the same shop-windows, with a miserable indifference, fifty times a day. At first, he came out from his lodging with an uneasy sense of being observed — even by those chance passers-by on whom he had never looked before, and hundreds to one would never see again — issuing in the morning from a public-house; but now, in his comings-out and goings-in he did not mind to lounge about the door, or to stand sunning himself in careless thought beside the wooden stem, studded from head to heel with pegs, on which the beer-pots dangled like so many boughs upon a pewter-tree. And yet it took but five weeks to reach the lowest round of this tall ladder!

Oh, moralists, who treat of happiness and self-respect, innate in every sphere of life, and shedding light on every grain of dust in God's highway, so smooth below your carriage-wheels, so rough beneath the tread of naked feet, — bethink yourselves in looking on the swift descent of men who *have* lived in their own esteem, that there are scores of thousands breathing now, and breathing thick with painful toil, who in that high respect have never lived at all, nor had a chance of life! Go ye, who rest so placidly upon the sacred Bard who had been young, and when he strung his harp was old, and had never seen the right-

ten, or his seed begging their bread; go, Teache
l honest pride, into the mine, the mill, the fo
l depths of deepest ignorance, and uttermost abje
ject, and say can any hopeful plant spring up in
that it extinguishes the soul's bright torch as fast

And, oh! ye Pharisees of the nineteen hundr
Christian Knowledge, who soundingly appeal to ha
see that it be human first. Take heed it has not
rmed, during your slumber and the sleep of generati
he nature of the Beasts!

e weeks! Of all the twenty or thirty answers, not
come. His money — even the additional stock he
d from the disposal of his spare clothes (and that was
, for clothes, though dear to buy, are cheap to pawn
fast diminishing. Yet what could he do? At time
y came over him in which he darted forth again, the
he was but newly home, and, returning to some place where
had been already twenty times, made some new attempt to
his end, but always unsuccessfully. He was years and y
too old for a cabin-boy, and years upon years too young
to be accepted as a common seaman. His dress and
too, militated fatally against any such proposal as the at
and yet he was reduced to making it, for, even if he
have contemplated the being set down in America
without money, he had not enough left now for a steer
passage and the poorest provisions upon the voyage.

It is an illustration of a very common tendency in the
of man, that all this time he never once doubted, one
almost say, the certainty of doing great things in the
World, if he could only get there. In proportion as he be
more and more dejected by his present circumstances, and
means of gaining America receded from his grasp, the m
fretted himself with the conviction that that was the
in which he could hope to achieve any high end, and
his brain with the thought that men going there in the
while might anticipate him in the attainment of
which were dearest to his heart. He often thought
Westlock, and besides looking out for him on all
actually walked about London for three days together,
express purpose of meeting with him. But, although he
in this, and although he would not have scrupled to ha

ey of him, and although he believed that John would have it, yet still he could not bring his mind to write to Pinch inquire where he was to be found. For although, as we seen, he was fond of Tom after his own fashion, he could endure the thought (feeling so superior to Tom) of making the stepping-stone to his fortune, or being anything to but a patron; and his pride so revolted from the idea that strained him even now.

might have yielded, however, and no doubt must have led soon, but for a very strange and unlooked-for occur-

he five weeks had quite run out and he was in a truly erate plight, when one evening, having just returned to odging, and being in the act of lighting his candle at the et in the bar before stalking moodily up stairs to his own , his landlord called him by his name. Now, as he had r told it to the man, but had scrupulously kept it to him- he was not a little startled by this; and so plainly showed igitation, that the landlord to reassure him said "it was a letter."

A letter!" cried Martin.

For Mr. Martin Chuzzlewit," said the landlord, reading uperscription of one he held in his hand. "Noon. Chief e. Paid."

artin took it from him, thanked him, and walked up s. It was not sealed, but pasted close; the hand-writing quite unknown to him. He opened it, and found en- d, without any name, address, or other inscription or ination of any kind whatever, a Bank of England note for nty Pounds.

) say that he was perfectly stunned with astonishment and ht; that he looked again and again at the note and the per; that he hurried below stairs to make quite certain the note was a good note, and then hurried up again to fy himself for the fiftieth time that he had not overlooked scrap of writing on the wrapper; that he exhausted and ldered himself with conjectures, and could make nothing ; but that there the note was and he was suddenly en- d, would be only to relate so many matters of course to urpose. The final upshot of the business at that time that he resolved to treat himself to a comfortable but

al in his own chamber; and having ordered a fi
ued, went out to purchase it forthwith.
bought some cold beef, and ham, and French bread,
r, and came back with his pockets pretty heavily lo
as somewhat of a damping circumstance to find the r
of smoke, which was attributable to two causes: firstly
flue being naturally vicious and a smoker; and secon
heir having forgotten in lighting the fire, an odd sod
and some other trifles, which had been put up the chim
eep the rain out. They had already remedied this e
, however, and propped up the window-sash with a l
of firewood to keep it open; so that, except in being ra
nmatory to the eyes and choking to the lungs, the ap
t was quite comfortable.

Martin was in no vein to quarrel with it, if it had been
tolerable order, especially when a gleaming pint of po
was set upon the table, and the servant-girl withdrew, hav
with her particular instructions relative to the production
something hot when he should ring the bell. The cold m
being wrapped in a play-bill, Martin laid the cloth by spr
ing that document on the little round table with the p
downwards; and arranging the collation upon it. The fir
the bed, which was very close to the fire, answered for a c
board; and when he had completed these preparations,
squeezed an old arm-chair into the warmest corner, and
down to enjoy himself.

He had begun to eat with great appetite, glancing roun
room meanwhile with a triumphant anticipation of quittin
for ever on the morrow, when his attention was arrested b
stealthy footstep on the stairs, and presently by a knock at
chamber door, which, although it was a gentle knock enou
communicated such a start to the bundle of firewood that
instantly leaped out of window, and plunged into the street.

"More coals, I suppose," said Martin. "Come in!"

"It ain't a liberty, sir, though it seems so," replied
man's voice. "Your servant, sir. Hope you're pretty w
sir."

Martin stared at the face that was bowing in the door
perfectly remembering the features and expression, but q
forgetting to whom they belonged.

"Tapley, sir," said his visitor. "Him as formerly live

the Dragon, sir, and was forced to leave in consequence of a want of jollity, sir."

"To be sure!" cried Martin. "Why, how did you come here?"

"Right through the passage, and up the stairs, sir," said Mark.

"How did you find me out, I mean?" asked Martin.

"Why, sir," said Mark, "I've passed you once or twice in the street, if I'm not mistaken; and when I was a looking in at the beef-and-ham shop just now, along with a hungry sweep, as was very much calculated to make a man jolly, sir, I see you a buying that."

Martin reddened as he pointed to the table, and said, somewhat hastily: —

"Well! what then?"

"Why then, sir," said Mark, "I made bold to foller; and as I told 'em down stairs that you expected me, I was let up."

"Are you charged with any message, that you told them you were expected?" inquired Martin.

"No, sir, I ain't," said Mark. "That was what you may call a pious fraud, sir, that was."

Martin cast an angry look at him; but there was something in the fellow's merry face, and in his manner — which with all its cheerfulness was far from being obtrusive or familiar — that quite disarmed him. He had lived a solitary life too, for many weeks, and the voice was pleasant in his ear.

"Tapley," he said, "I'll deal openly with you. From all I can judge, and from all I have heard of you through Pinch, you are not a likely kind of fellow to have been brought here by impertinent curiosity or any other offensive motive. Sit down. I'm glad to see you."

"Thankee, sir," said Mark. "I'd as lieve stand."

"If you don't sit down," retorted Martin, "I'll not talk to you."

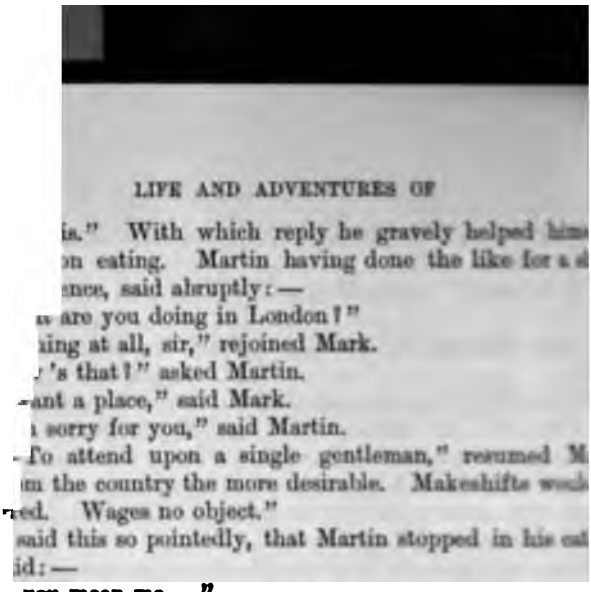
"Very good, sir," observed Mark. "Your will 's a law, sir. Down it is;" and he sat down accordingly upon the bedstead.

"Help yourself," said Martin, handing him the only knife.

"Thankee, sir," rejoined Mark. "After you've done."

"If you don't take it now, you'll not have any," said Martin.

"Very good, sir," rejoined Mark. "That being your desire





is." With which reply he gravely helped him
on eating. Martin having done the like for a s
ence, said abruptly:—
are you doing in London?"
ing at all, sir," rejoined Mark.
's that?" asked Martin.
ant a place," said Mark.
sorry for you," said Martin.
To attend upon a single gentleman," resumed M
m the country the more desirable. Makeshifts woul
red. Wages no object."
said this so pointedly, that Martin stopped in his eat
id:—

**you mean me—"**

**s, I do, sir," interposed Mark.**

**"Then you may judge from my style of living here of means of keeping a man-servant. Besides, I am going to Am ica immediately."**

"Well, sir," returned Mark, quite unmoved by this int gence, "from all that ever I heard about it, I should say Am ica is a very likely sort of place for me to be jolly in!"

Again Martin looked at him angrily, and again his a melted away in spite of himself.

"Lord bless you, sir," said Mark, "what is the use of going round and round, and hiding behind the corner, dodging up and down, when we can come straight to the p in six words! I've had my eye upon you any time this night. I see well enough that there's a screw loose in affairs. I knowed well enough the first time I see you at the Dragon that it must be so, sooner or later. Now, here am I, without a situation, without any want of wages a year to come, for I saved up (I did n't mean to do it, I could n't help it) at the Dragon — here am I with a liking what's wentersome, and a liking for you, and a wish to out strong under circumstances as would keep other men d and will you take me, or will you leave me?"

"How can I take you?" cried Martin.

"When I say take," repeated Mark, "I mean will you me go? and when I say will you let me go, I mean will you me go along with you? for go I will, somehow or an Now that you 've said America, I see clear at once, that th

the place for me to be jolly in. Therefore, if I don't pay my own passage in the ship you go in, sir, I 'll pay my own passage in another. And mark my words, if I go alone it shall be, to carry out the principle, in the rottenest, craziest, leakingest tub of a wessel that a place can be got in for love or money. So if I 'm lost upon the way, sir, there 'll be a drowned man at your door — and always a knocking double-knocks at it, too, or never trust me!"

"This is mere folly," said Martin.

"Very good, sir," returned Mark. "I 'm glad to hear it, because if you don't mean to let me go, you 'll be more comfortable, perhaps, on account of thinking so. Therefore I contradict no gentleman. But all I say is, that if I don't emigrate to America in that case, in the beastliest old cockle-shell as goes out of port, I 'm —"

"You don't mean what you say, I 'm sure," said Martin.

"Yes, I do," cried Mark.

"I tell you I know better," rejoined Martin.

"Very good, sir," said Mark, with the same air of perfect satisfaction. "Let it stand that way at present, sir, and wait and see how it turns out. Why, love my heart alive! the only doubt I have, is whether there 's any credit in going with a gentleman like you, that 's as certain to make his way there as a gimlet is to go through soft deal."

This was touching Martin on his weak point, and having him at a great advantage. He could not help thinking, either, what a brisk fellow this Mark was, and how great a change he had wrought in the atmosphere of the dismal little room already.

"Why, certainly, Mark," he said, "I have hopes of doing well there, or I should n't go. I may have the qualifications for doing well, perhaps."

"Of course you have, sir," returned Mark Tapley. "Everybody knows that."

"You see," said Martin, leaning his chin upon his hand, and looking at the fire, "ornamental architecture applied to domestic purposes can hardly fail to be in great request in that country; for men are constantly changing their residences there, and moving further off; and it 's clear they must have houses to live in."

"I should say, sir," observed Mark, "that that 's a state of things as opens one of the jolliest look-outs for domestic architecture that ever I heerd tell on."

glanced at him hastily, not feeling quite free fro
that this remark implied a doubt of the succes
s plans. But Mr. Tapley was eating the boiled l
with such entire good faith and singleness of purp
in his visage, that he could not but be satisfi
loubt arose in his mind, however, as this one dis
He produced the blank cover in which the note l
osed, and fixing his eyes on Mark as he put it in
id: —
tell me the truth. Do you know anything ab

turned it over and over; held it near his eyes; held
on him at arm's length; held it with the superscript
, and with the superscription downwards; and sh
mad with such a genuine expression of astonishment
ng asked the question, that Martin said, as he took it fr

him again: —

"No, I see you don't. How should you! Though, indee your knowing about it would not be more extraordinary th its being here. Come, Tapley," he added, after a momen thought, "I 'll trust you with my history, such as it is, and then you 'll see, more clearly, what sort of fortunes you wo link yourself to if you followed me."

"I beg your pardon, sir," said Mark; "but afore you en upon it, will you take me if I choose to go? Will you turn me — Mark Tapley — formerly of the Blue Dragon, as was well recommended by Mr. Pinch, and as wants a gentleman your strength of mind to look up to; or will you, in climb the ladder as you 're certain to get to the top of, take me al with you at a respectful distance? Now, sir," said Mark, "it of very little importance to you, I know — there 's the di culty, but it 's of very great importance to me; and will you so good as to consider of it?"

If this were meant as a second appeal to Martin's weak s founded on his observation of the effect of the first, Mr Tap was a skilful and shrewd observer. Whether an intentional an accidental shot, it hit the mark full; for Martin, relent more and more, said with a condescension which was inexpr ibly delicious to him, after his recent humiliation: —

"We 'll see about it, Tapley. You shall tell me in w disposition you find yourself to-morrow."

"Then, sir," said Mark, rubbing his hands, "the job 's done. Go on, sir, if you please. I 'm all attention."

Throwing himself back in his arm-chair, and looking at the fire, with now and then a glance at Mark, who at such times nodded his head sagely, to express his profound interest and attention, Martin ran over the chief points in his history, to the same effect as he had related them weeks before to Mr. Pinch. But he adapted them, according to the best of his judgment, to Mr. Tapley's comprehension; and with that view made as light of his love affair as he could, and referred to it in very few words. But here he reckoned without his host; for Mark's interest was keenest in this part of the business, and prompted him to ask sundry questions in relation to it; for which he apologised as one in some measure privileged to do so, from having seen (as Martin explained to him) the young lady at the Blue Dragon.

"And a young lady as any gentleman ought to feel more proud of being in love with," said Mark energetically, "don't draw breath."

"Ay! You saw her when she was not happy," said Martin, gazing at the fire again. "If you had seen her in the old times, indeed —"

"Why, she certainly was a little down-hearted, sir, and something paler in her colour than I could have wished," said Mark, "but none the worse in her looks for that. I think she seemed better, sir, after she come to London."

Martin withdrew his eyes from the fire; stared at Mark as if he thought he had suddenly gone mad; and asked him what he meant.

"No offence intended, sir," urged Mark. "I don't mean to say she was any the happier without you; but I thought she was a looking better, sir."

"Do you mean to tell me she has been in London?" asked Martin, rising hurriedly, and pushing back his chair.

"Of course I do," said Mark, rising too, in great amazement, from the bedstead.

"Do you mean to tell me she 's in London now?"

"Most likely, sir. I mean to say she was, a week ago."

"And you know where?"

"Yes!" cried Mark. "What! Don't you?"

"My good fellow!" exclaimed Martin, clutching him by

"I have never seen her since I left my grand
mother."

then!" cried Mark, giving the little table such a
his clenched fist that the slices of beef and ham
upon it, while all his features seemed, with delight, to
up into his forehead, and never coming back again
e, "if I ain't your nat'ral born servant, hired by Fate,
n't such a thing in natur' as a Blue Dragon. What
was a rambling up and down a old church-yard in the
ting myself into a jolly state, did n't I see your grand
toddling to and fro for pretty nigh a mortal hour?
I watch him into Todgers's commercial boarding-house,
tch him out, and watch him home to his hotel, and pr
ell him as his was the service for my money, and I had
so, afore I left the Dragon! Was n't the young lady
ng with him then, and did n't she fall a laughing in a
manner as was beautiful to see! Did n't your grandfather say,
'Come back again next week,' and did n't I go next week;
and did n't he say that he could n't make up his mind to trust
nobody no more, and therefore would n't engage me; but at
the same time stood something to drink as was handsome?
Why," cried Mr. Tapley, with a comical mixture of humour
and chagrin, "where 's the credit of a man's being jolly under
such circumstances! who could help it, when things was
about like this!"

For some moments, Martin stood gazing at him, as if he
really doubted the evidence of his senses, and could not believe
that Mark stood there, in the lady before him. At length he
asked him whether, if the young lady were still in London, he
thought he could contrive to deliver a letter to her secretly.

"Do I think I can!" cried Mark. "*Think* I can! Here,
sit down, sir. Write it out, sir!"

With that he cleared the table by the summary process of
tilting everything upon it into the fire-place, snatched away the
writing materials from the mantel-shelf, set Martin a chair
before them, forced him down into it, dipped a pen into the
ink, and put it in his hand.

"Out away, sir!" cried Mark. "Make it strong, sir. Let
it be wery pinted, sir. Do I think so? *I* should think so.
Go to work, sir!"

Martin required no further adjuration, but went to work

; rate; while Mr. Tapley, installing himself without any
'ormalities into the functions of his valet and general
ınt, divested himself of his coat, and went on to clear
:-place and arrange the room — talking to himself in a
ice the whole time.

lly sort of lodgings," said Mark, rubbing his nose with
› at the end of the fire-shovel, and looking round the
hamber: "that 's a comfort. The rain 's come through
f too. That ain't bad. A lively old bedstead, I 'll be
popilated by lots of wampires, no doubt. Come! my
is a getting up again. An uncommon ragged night-cap
A very good sign. We shall do yet! Here Jane, my
calling down the stairs, "bring up that there hot tum-
r my master, as was a mixing when I come in. That 's
ir," to Martin. "Go at it as if you meant it, sir. Be
nder, sir, if you please. You can't make it too strong,

## CHAPTER XIV

MARTIN BIDS ADIEU TO THE LADY OF HIS LOVE; AND AN OBSCURE INDIVIDUAL WHOSE FORTUNE HE INTENDS BY COMMENDING HER TO HIS PROTECTION.

letter being duly signed, sealed, and delivered, was o Mark Tapley, for immediate conveyance if possible. succeeded so well in his embassy as to be enabled to ...at same night, just as the house was closing; with the ...e intelligence that he had sent it up stairs to the young lady, enclosed in a small manuscript of his own, purporting to contain his further petition to be engaged in Mr. Chuzzlewit's service; and that she had herself come down and told him, in great haste and agitation, that she would meet the gentleman at eight o'clock to-morrow morning in St. James's Park. It was then agreed between the new master and the new man, that Mark should be in waiting near the hotel in good time, to escort the young lady to the place of appointment, and when they had parted for the night with this understanding, Martin took up his pen again; and before he went to bed wrote another letter, whereof more will be seen presently.

He was up before daybreak, and came upon the Park with the morning, which was clad in the least engaging of the three hundred and sixty-five dresses in the wardrobe of the year. It was raw, damp, dark, and dismal; the clouds were as muddy as the ground, and the short perspective of every street and avenue was closed up by the mist as by a filthy curtain.

"Fine weather indeed," Martin bitterly soliloquised, "to be wandering up and down here in, like a thief! Fine weather indeed, for a meeting of lovers in the open air, and in a public walk! I need be departing, with all speed, for another country, for I have come to a pretty pass in this!"

He might perhaps have gone on to reflect that of all mornings in the year, it was not the best calculated for a young lady's coming forth on such an errand, either. But he was

stopped on the road to this reflection, if his thoughts tended that way, by her appearance at a short distance, on which he hurried forward to meet her. Her squire, Mr. Tapley, at the same time fell discreetly back, and surveyed the fog above him with an appearance of attentive interest.

"My dear Martin," said Mary.

"My dear Mary," said Martin; and lovers are such a singular kind of people that this is all they did say just then, though Martin took her arm, and her hand too, and they paced up and down a short walk that was least exposed to observation, half a dozen times.

"If you have changed at all, my love, since we parted," said Martin at length, as he looked upon her with a proud delight, "it is only to be more beautiful than ever!"

Had she been of the common metal of love-worn young ladies, she would have denied this in her most interesting manner; and would have told him that she knew she had become a perfect fright; or that she had wasted away with weeping and anxiety; or that she was dwindling gently into an early grave; or that her mental sufferings were unspeakable; or would, either by tears or words, or a mixture of both, have furnished him with some other information to that effect, and made him as miserable as possible. But she had been reared up in a sterner school than the minds of most young girls are formed in; she had had her nature strengthened by the hands of hard endurance and necessity; had come out from her young trials constant, self-denying, earnest, and devoted; had acquired in her maidenhood — whether happily in the end, for herself or him, is foreign to our present purpose to inquire — something of that nobler quality of gentle hearts which is developed often by the sorrows and struggles of matronly years, but often by their lessons only. Unspoiled, unpampered in her joys or griefs, with frank, and full, and deep affection for the object of her early love, she saw in him one who for her sake was an outcast from his home and fortune, and she had no more idea of bestowing that love upon him in other than cheerful and sustaining words, full of high hope and grateful trustfulness, than she had of being unworthy of it, in her lightest thought or deed, for any base temptation that the world could offer.

"What change is there in *you*, Martin," she replied; "for

erns me nearest! You look more anxious and
gnawl than you used."

Why as to that, my love," said Martin, as he drew
st within his arm, first looking round to see that there
observers near, and beholding Mr. Tapley more intent
on the fog; "it would be strange if I did not; for m
pecially of late — has been a hard one."

know it must have been," she answered. "When
gotten to think of it and you!"

Not often, I hope," said Martin. "Not often, I am
often, I have some right to expect, Mary; for I
gone a great deal of vexation and privation, and I
look for that return, you know."

A very, very poor return," she answered with a f
smile. "But you have it, and will have it always. You
paid a dear price for a poor heart, Martin; but it is a
your own, and a true one."

"Of course I feel quite certain of that," said Martin,
should n't have put myself in my present position And
say a poor heart, Mary, for I say a rich one Now,
about to break a design to you, dearest, which will start
at first, but which is undertaken for your sake. I am g
he added slowly, looking far into the deep wonder of her
dark eyes, "abroad."

"Abroad, Martin!"

"Only to America. See now — how you droop directly

"If I do, or, I hope I may say, if I did," she answ
raising her head after a short silence, and looking once
into his face, "it was for grief to think of what you a
solved to undergo for me. I would not venture to dis
you, Martin, but it is a long, long distance; there is a
ocean to be crossed; illness and want are sad calamities in
place, but in a foreign country dreadful to endure. Hav
thought of all this!"

"Thought of it!" cried Martin, abating, in his fondn
and he *was* very fond of her — hardly an iota of his
impetuosity. "What am I to do! It 's very well to
'Have I thought of it!' my love; but you should ask
the same breath, have I thought of starving at home h
thought of doing porter's work for a living, have I th
of holding horses in the streets to earn my roll of bread

day to day? Come, come," he added, in a gentler tone, "do not hang down your head, my dear, for I need the encouragement that your sweet face alone can give me. Why, that's well! Now you are brave again."

"I am endeavouring to be," she answered, smiling through her tears.

"Endeavouring to be anything that's good, and being it, is, with you, all one. Don't I know that of old?" cried Martin gaily. "So! That's famous! Now I can tell you all my plans as cheerfully as if you were my little wife already, Mary."

She hung more closely on his arm, and, looking upward in his face, bade him speak on.

"You see," said Martin, playing with the little hand upon his wrist, "that my attempts to advance myself at home have been baffled and rendered abortive. I will not say by whom, Mary, for that would give pain to us both. But so it is. Have you heard him speak of late of any relative of mine or his, called Pecksniff? Only tell me what I ask you, no more."

"I have heard, to my surprise, that he is a better man than was supposed."

"I thought so," interrupted Martin.

"And that it is likely we may come to know him, if not to visit and reside with him and — I think — his daughters. He *has* daughters, has he, love?"

"A pair of them," Martin answered. "A precious pair! Gems of the first water!"

"Ah! You are jesting!"

"There is a sort of jesting which is very much in earnest, and includes some pretty serious disgust," said Martin. "I jest in reference to Mr. Pecksniff (at whose house I have been living as his assistant, and at whose hands I have received insult and injury) in that vein. Whatever betides, or however closely you may be brought into communication with his family, never forget that, Mary; and never for an instant, whatever appearances may seem to contradict me, lose sight of this assurance — Pecksniff is a scoundrel."

"Indeed!"

"In thought, and in deed, and in everything else. A scoundrel from the topmost hair of his head to the nethermost atom of his heel. Of his daughters I will only say that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, they are dutiful young ladies,

fter their father closely. This is a digression from
, and yet it brings me to what I was going to say.
topped to look into her eyes again, and seeing, i
nce over his shoulder, that there was no one near,
k was still intent upon the fog, not only looked at
, but kissed them into the bargain.
w, I am going to America, with great prospects of d
ul of returning home myself very soon; it may b
ou there for a few years, but, at all events, to claim
ay wife; which, after such trials, I should do with no
ur still thinking it a duty to cleave to him who will
me to live (for this is true), if he can help it, in my
How long I may be absent is, of course, uncertain;
ll not be very long. Trust me for that."

**in the mean time, dear Martin —"**

**That 's the very thing I am coming to. In the mean t
you shall hear, constantly, of all my goings-on. Thus."**

**He paused to take from his pocket the letter he had wri**
over-night, and then resumed: —

"In this fellow's employment, and living in this fel
house (by fellow, I mean Mr. Pecksniff, of course), there
certain person of the name of Pinch — don't forget it — a p
strange, simple oddity, Mary; but thoroughly honest and
cere; full of zeal, and with a cordial regard for me wh
mean to return one of these days, by setting him up in li
some way or other."

"Your old kind nature, Martin!"

"Oh!" said Martin, "that 's not worth speaking of,
love. He 's very grateful and desirous to serve me, and I
more than repaid. Now one night I told this Pinch
tory, and all about myself and you, in which he was
little interested, I can tell you, for he knows you! Ar
may look surprised — and the longer the better, for it 's
you — but you have heard him play the organ in the
that village before now; and he has seen you listening
music — and has caught his inspiration from you, too."

"Was *he* the organist!" cried Mary. "I thank him
my heart."

"Yes he was," said Martin, "and is, and gets nothing
it either. There never was such a simple fellow! Quite
infant! But a very good sort of creature, I assure you."

"I am sure of that," she said, with great earnestness. "He ust be!"

"Oh, yes, no doubt at all about it," rejoined Martin, in his sual careless way. "He is. Well! It has occurred to me – but stay, if I read you what I have written and intend send-ıg to him by post to-night, it will explain itself. 'My dear om Pinch.' That 's rather familiar, perhaps," said Martin, ıddenly remembering that he was proud when they had last ıet, "but I call him my dear Tom Pinch, because he likes it, ıd it pleases him."

"Very right, and very kind," said Mary.

"Exactly so!" cried Martin. "It 's as well to be kind henever one can; and, as I said before, he really is an excel-ıt fellow. 'My dear Tom Pinch, — I address this under ver to Mrs. Lupin, at the Blue Dragon, and have begged her ı a short note to deliver it to you without saying anything bout it elsewhere; and to do the same with all future letters he may receive from me. My reason for so doing will be at nce apparent to you' — I don't know that it will be, by the ye," said Martin, breaking off, "for he 's slow of comprehen-ion, poor fellow; but he 'll find it out in time. My reason imply is that I don't want my letters to be read by other eople; and particularly by the scoundrel whom he thinks an ngel."

"Mr. Pecksniff again?" asked Mary.

"The same," said Martin; — "'will be at once apparent to ou. I have completed my arrangements for going to America; nd you will be surprised to hear that I am to be accompanied y Mark Tapley, upon whom I have stumbled strangely in ondon, and who insists on putting himself under my protec-on' — meaning, my love," said Martin, breaking off again, our friend in the rear, of course."

She was delighted to hear this, and bestowed a kind glance pon Mark, which he brought his eyes down from the fog to ıcounter, and received with immense satisfaction. She said ı his hearing, too, that he was a good soul and a merry crea-ıre, and would be faithful, she was certain; commendations hich Mr. Tapley inwardly resolved to deserve, from such lips, he died for it.

"'Now, my dear Pinch,'" resumed Martin, proceeding with is letter; "'I am going to repose great trust in you, knowing

ay do so with perfect reliance on your honor
ourvey, and having nobody else just now to trust in.'"

"I don't think I would say that, Martin."

"Would n't you? Well! I 'll take that out. It 's
y true, though."

But it might seem ungracious, perhaps."

"Oh, I don't mind Pinch," said Martin. "They'
casion to stand on any ceremony with *him*. However
it out, as you wish it, and make the full stop at 'see
y well! 'I shall not only'—this is the letter again
know."

"I understand."

"'I shall not only inclose my letters to the young la
whom I have told you, to your charge, to be forwarded a
may request; but I most earnestly commit her, the young
herself, to your care and regard, in the event of your m
in my absence. I have reason to think that the probab
of your encountering each other—perhaps very frequen
are now neither remote nor few; and although in your p
you can do very little to lessen the uneasiness of her l
to you implicitly to do that much, and so deserve the
dence I have reposed in you.' You see, my dear Mar
Martin, "it will be a great consolation to you to have a
no matter how simple, with whom you can speak as
and the very first time you talk to Pinch, you 'll feel a
that there is no more occasion for any embarrassment or
tion in talking to him than if he were an old woman.

"However that may be," she returned smiling, "he
friend, and that is enough."

"Oh, yes, he 's my friend," said Martin, "certainly
fact, I have told him in so many words that we 'll alway
notice of him, and protect him, and it 's a good trait
character that he 's grateful—very grateful, indeed. Y
like him of all things, my love, I know. You 'll observe
much that 's comical and old-fashioned about Pinch, bu
need n't mind laughing at him, for he 'll not care a b
He 'll rather like it, indeed!"

"I don't think I shall put that to the test, Martin."

"You won't if you can help it, of course," he said, "
think you 'll find him a little too much for your g
However that 's neither here nor there, and it certainly

letter; which ends thus: 'Knowing that I need not im-
ss the nature and extent of that confidence upon you at any
ıter length, as it is already sufficiently established in your
ıd, I will only say in bidding you farewell, and looking
vard to our next meeting, that I shall charge myself from
time, through all changes for the better, with your ad-
cement and happiness, as if they were my own. You may
upon that. And always believe me, my dear Tom Pinch,
hfully your friend, Martin Chuzzlewit. P. S. I inclose
amount which you so kindly'—oh," said Martin, check-
himself, and folding up the letter, "that's nothing!"
\t this crisis Mark Tapley interposed, with an apology for
ıarking that the clock at the Horse Guards was striking.
'Which I should n't have said nothing about, sir," added
rk, "if the young lady had n't begged me to be particular
nentioning it."
'I did," said Mary. "Thank you. You are quite right.
another minute I shall be ready to return. We have time
a very few words more, dear Martin, and, although I had
ch to say, it must remain unsaid until the happy time of
next meeting. Heaven send it may come speedily and
sperously! But I have no fear of that."
'Fear!" cried Martin. "Why, who has? What are a few
nths? What is a whole year? When I come gaily back,
:h a road through life hewn out before me, then, indeed,
king back upon this parting, it may seem a dismal one.
t now! I swear I would n't have it happen under more
'ourable auspices, if I could; for then I should be less
:lined to go, and less impressed with the necessity."
"Yes, yes. I feel that, too. When do you go?"
"To-night. We leave for Liverpool to-night. A vessel
ls from that port, as I hear, in three days. In a month, or
s, we shall be there. Why, what's a month! How many
ıths have flown by since our last parting!"
"Long to look back upon," said Mary, echoing his cheerful
ıe, "but nothing in their course!"
"Nothing at all!" cried Martin. "I shall have change of
ne and change of place; change of people, change of man-
ıs, change of cares and hopes! Time will wear wings,
leed! I can bear anything, so that I have swift action,
ıry."

he thinking solely of her care for him, when he
e heed of her share in the separation; of her
nous endurance, and her slow anxiety from day to
here nothing jarring and discordant even in his
, with this one note "self" for ever audible, h
a strain? Not in her ears. It had been better
perhaps, but so it was. She heard the same bold
a had flung away as dross all gain and profit for her
aking light of peril and privation that she might be saf
n ; and she heard no more. That heart where
f no place and raised no throne is slow to recogn
presence when it looks upon it. As one possessed
n spirit was held in old time to be alone conscious
rking demon in the breasts of other men, so kindre
know each other in their hiding-places every day, when
is incredulous and blind.

**"The quarter's gone!" cried Mr. Tapley, in a v**
**admonition.**

"I shall be ready to return immediately," she said
thing, dear Martin, I am bound to tell you. You ent
me a few minutes since only to answer what you asked
reference to one theme, but you should and must k
otherwise I could not be at ease — that, since that separa
which I was the unhappy occasion, he has never once
your name; has never coupled it, or any faint allusion
with passion or reproach; and has never abated in his k
to me."

"I thank him for that last act," said Martin, "a
nothing else. Though on consideration I may thank h
his other forbearance also, inasmuch as I neither expe
desire that he will mention my name again. He may
perhaps to couple it with reproach — in his will. Le
if he please! By the time it reaches me, he will be
grave; a satire on his own anger, God help him!"

"Martin! If you would but sometimes, in a
hour; beside the winter fire; in the summer air, wh
hear gentle music, or think of Death, or Home, or Chi
if you would at such a season resolve to think, but
month, or even once a year, of him, or any one wh
wronged you, you would forgive him in your heart, I kn

"If I believed that to be true, Mary," he replied, "I

solve at no such time to bear him in my mind, wishing to spare myself the shame of such a weakness. I was not born to be the toy and puppet of any man, far less his; to whose pleasure and caprice, in return for any good he did me, my whole youth was sacrificed. It became between us two a fair exchange — a barter — and no more; and there is no such balance against me that I need throw in a mawkish forgiveness to poise the scale. He has forbidden all mention of me to you, I know," he added hastily. "Come! Has he not?"

"That was long ago," she returned; "immediately after your parting; before you had left the house. He has never done so since."

"He has never done so since, because he has seen no occasion," said Martin; "but that is of little consequence, one way or other. Let all allusion to him between you and me be interdicted from this time forth. And therefore, love," — he drew her quickly to him, for the time of parting had now come, — "in the first letter that you write to me through the Post Office, addressed to New York, and in all the others that you send through Pinch, remember he has no existence, but has become to us as one who is dead. Now, God bless you! This is a strange place for such a meeting and such a parting; but our next meeting shall be in a better, and our next and last parting in a worse."

"One other question, Martin, I must ask. Have you provided money for this journey?"

"Have I?" cried Martin; it might have been in his pride; it might have been in his desire to set her mind at ease: "Have I provided money? Why, there 's a question for an emigrant's wife! How could I move on land or sea without love?"

"I mean, enough."

"Enough! More than enough. Twenty times more than enough. A pocketful. Mark and I, for all essential ends, are quite as rich as if we had the purse of Fortunatus in our baggage."

"The half-hour 's a going!" cried Mr. Tapley.

"Good-bye a hundred times!" cried Mary, in a trembling voice.

But how cold the comfort in Good-bye! Mark Tapley knew it perfectly. Perhaps he knew it from his reading, perhaps

his experience, perhaps from intuition. It is impo
say; but however he knew it, his knowledge instinct
ested to him the wisest course of proceeding that any
d have adopted under the circumstances. He was
n a violent fit of sneezing, and was obliged to turn his
ther way. In doing which, he in a manner fence
reened the lovers into a corner by themselves.

There was a short pause, but Mark had an undefined
tion that it was a satisfactory one in its way. Then
with her veil lowered, passed him with a quick step, and
oned him to follow. She stopped once more before th
that corner, looked back, and waved her hand to Martin
made a start towards them at the moment as if he ha
other farewell words to say; but she only hurried
faster, and Mr. Tapley followed as in duty bound.

When he rejoined Martin again in his own chamb
found that gentleman seated moodily before the dusty
with his two feet on the fender, his two elbows on his
and his chin supported in a not very ornamental man
the palms of his hands.

"Well, Mark!"

"Well, sir," said Mark, taking a long breath, "I
young lady safe home, and I feel pretty comfortable
She sent a lot of kind words, sir, and this," [illegible]
ring, "for a parting keepsake."

"Diamonds!" said Martin, kissing it — [illegible]
tice, it was for her sake; not for theirs — and [illegible]
little finger. "Splendid diamonds. My gran[illegible]
gular character, Mark. He must have given her [illegible]

Mark Tapley knew as well that she had [illegible]
end that that unconscious speaker might [illegible]
sterling value with him in his necessity, as he [illegible]
was day, and not night. Though he had [illegible]
of his own knowledge with the history of the [illegible]
on Martin's outspread finger than Martin himself had,
as certain that in its purchase she had [illegible]
stock of hoarded money as if he had seen it [illegible]
coin. Her lover's strange obtuseness in relation [illegible]
incident promptly suggested to Mark's mind [illegible]
root, and from that moment he had a clear and perfect
into the one absorbing principle of Martin's character

ıe is worthy of the sacrifices I have made," said Martin,
g his arms, and looking at the ashes in the stove, as if
ıumption of some former thoughts. "Well worthy of
No riches" — here he stroked his chin, and mused —
l have compensated for the loss of such a nature. Not
ıtion that, in gaining her affection, I have followed the
ıf my own wishes, and baulked the selfish schemes of
who had no right to form them. She is quite worthy
re than worthy — of the sacrifices I have made. Yes,
No doubt of it."

ıse ruminations might or might not have reached Mark
r; for though they were by no means addressed to him,
ıey were softly uttered. In any case, he stood there,
ing Martin with an indescribable and most involved ex-
ın on his visage, until that young man roused himself
ıoked towards him; when he turned away, as being sud-
intent on certain preparations for the journey, and, with-
ving vent to any articulate sound, smiled with surprising
iness, and seemed, by a twist of his features and a motion
lips, to release himself of this word: —

ılly!"

## CHAPTER XV

### THE BURDEN WHEREOF IS HAIL COLUMBIA!

A DARK and dreary night; people nestling in their b
circling late about the fire; Want, colder than Charity, s
ing at the street corners; church towers humming with th
vibration of their own tongues, but newly resting fro
ghostly preachment "One!" The earth covered with a
pall as for the burial of yesterday; the clumps of dark
its giant plumes of funeral feathers, waving sadly to an
all hushed, all noiseless, and in deep repose, save the
clouds that skim across the moon, and the cautious win
creeping after them upon the ground, it stops to listen
goes rustling on, and stops again, and follows, like a sav
the trail.

Whither go the clouds and wind, so eagerly! If
guilty spirits, they repair to some dread conference
powers like themselves, in what wild region do the ele
hold council, or where unbend in terrible disport!

Here! Free from that cramped prison called the earth
out upon the waste of waters. Here, roaring, racing, r
ing, howling, all night long. Hither come the scudding
from the caverns on the coast of that small island, sleep
thousand miles away, so quietly in the midst of angry
and hither, to meet them, rush the blasts from unknown
pieces of the world. Here, in the fury of their unc
liberty, they storm and buffet with each other, until th
lashed into passion like their own, leaps up, in ravings m
than theirs, and the whole scene is madness.

On, on, on, over the countless miles of angry space r
ing heaving billows. Mountains and caves are here, a
are not for what is now the one is now the other. th
but a boiling heap of rushing water. Pursuit, and
and return of wave on wave, and savage struggle,
the spouting up of foam that whitens the black night.

e of place, and form, and hue; constancy in nothing
l strife; on, on, on, they roll, and darker grows the
l louder howl the winds, and more clamorous and
ome the million voices in the sea, when the wild cry
upon the storm "A ship!"

she comes, in gallant combat with the elements, her
trembling, and her timbers starting on the strain;
e comes, now high upon the curling billows, now low
he hollows of the sea, as hiding for the moment from
nd every storm-voice in the air and water cries more
, "A ship!"

ie comes striving on; and at her boldness and the
cry the angry waves rise up above each other's hoary
look; and round about the vessel, far as the mariners
ks can pierce into the gloom, they press upon her,
ch other down, and starting up, and rushing forward
, in dreadful curiosity. High over her they break,
l her surge and roar, and, giving place to others,
depart, and dash themselves to fragments in their
ger; still she comes onward bravely. And though
multitude crowd thick and fast upon her all the
l dawn of day discovers the untiring train yet bearing
n the ship in an eternity of troubled water, onward
, with dim lights burning in her hull, and people there,
if no deadly element were peering in at every seam
, and no drowned seaman's grave, with but a plank
t, were yawning in the unfathomable depths below.

these sleeping voyagers were Martin and Mark Tap-
rocked into a heavy drowsiness by the unaccustomed
ere as insensible to the foul air in which they lay as
oar without. It was broad day when the latter awoke
n idea that he was dreaming of having gone to sleep
post bedstead which had turned bottom upwards in
e of the night. There was more reason in this, too,
he roasting of eggs; for the first objects Mr. Tapley
l when he opened his eyes were his own heels — look-
at him, as he afterwards observed, from a nearly
ular elevation.

!" said Mark, getting himself into a sitting posture,
ous ineffectual struggles with the rolling of the ship.
the first time as ever I stood on my head all night."

The man gave a grunt of discontented acquiescence over in his berth, and drew his blanket over his head.

"— For," said Mr. Tapley, pursuing the theme soliloquy, in a low tone of voice, "the sea is as thing as any going. It never knows what to do. It hasn't got no employment for its mind, and is a state of vacancy. Like them Polar bears in the shows as is constantly a nodding their heads from it never can be quiet. Which is entirely owing to mere stupidity."

"Is that you, Mark!" asked a faint voice from berth

"It's as much of me as is left, sir, after a fortnight work," Mr. Tapley replied. "What with leading the fly, ever since I've been aboard — for I've been p holding on to something or other, in a upside-down p what with that, sir, and putting a very little into my taking a good deal out of yourself, there ain't too much sweat by. How do *you* find yourself this morning, s

"Very miserable," said Martin, with a peevish "Ugh! I'm so wretched, indeed!"

"Creditable," muttered Mark, pressing one hand aching head and looking round him with a r "That's the great comfort. It is creditable t

dren, in various stages of sickness and misery, is not the liveliest place of assembly at any time; but when it is so crowded (as the steerage cabin of the Screw was, every passage out), that mattresses and beds are heaped upon the floor, to the extinction of everything like comfort, cleanliness, and decency, it is liable to operate not only as a pretty strong barrier against amiability of temper, but as a positive encourager of selfish and rough humours. Mark felt this, as he sat looking about him, and his spirits rose proportionately.

There were English people, Irish people, Welsh people, and Scotch people there; all with their little store of coarse food and shabby clothes; and nearly all with their families of children. There were children of all ages; from the baby at the breast to the slattern-girl who was as much a grown woman as her mother. Every kind of domestic suffering that is bred in poverty, illness, banishment, sorrow, and long travel in bad weather, was crammed into the little space; and yet was there infinitely less of complaint and querulousness, and infinitely more of mutual assistance and general kindness to be found in that unwholesome ark, than in many brilliant ball-rooms.

Mark looked about him wistfully, and his face brightened as he looked. Here an old grandmother was crooning over a sick child, and rocking it to and fro in arms hardly more wasted than its own young limbs; here a poor woman with an infant in her lap mended another little creature's clothes, and quieted another who was creeping up about her from their scanty bed upon the floor. Here were old men awkwardly engaged in little household offices, wherein they would have been ridiculous but for their good-will and kind purpose; and here were swarthy fellows — giants in their way — doing such little acts of tenderness for those about them as might have belonged to gentlest-hearted dwarfs. The very idiot in the corner who sat mowing there, all day, had his faculty of imitation roused by what he saw about him; and snapped his fingers to amuse a crying child.

"Now, then," said Mark, nodding to a woman who was dressing her three children at no great distance from him, — and the grin upon his face had by this time spread from ear to ear, — "hand over one of them young uns according to custom."

"I wish you 'd get breakfast, Mark, instead of worrying

le who don't belong to you," observed Martin p

ıl right," said Mark. "*She* 'll do that. It's a
ion of labour, sir. I wash her boys, and she make
I never *could* make tea, but any one can wash a boy.
woman, who was delicate and ill, felt and under
ndness, as well she might, for she had been cov
night with his great-coat, while he had had for his
the bare boards and a rug. But Martin, who seldom
looked about him, was quite incensed by the folly of
h, and expressed his dissatisfaction by an impatient gr
So it is, certainly," said Mark, brushing the child's ha
as if he had been born and bred a barber.
hat are you talking about, now?" asked Martin.
"What you said," replied Mark; "or what you meant, w
gave that there dismal vent to your feelings. I quit

**you along with it, sir. It *is* very hard upon her."**

**"What is?"**

**"Making the voyage by herself along with these young** pediments here, and going such a way at such a time of year to join her husband. If you don't want to be fr mad with yellow soap in your eye, young man," said Tapley to the second urchin, who was by this time under hands at the basin, "you 'd better shut it."

"Where does she join her husband?" asked Martin yo ing.

"Why, I 'm very much afraid," said Mr. Tapley, in a voice, "that she don't know. I hope she may n't miss h But she sent her last letter by hand, and it don't seem to h been very clearly understood between 'em without it, as she don't see him a waving his pocket-handkerchief on shore, like a pictur out of a song-book, my opinion is, sh break her heart."

"Why, how, in Folly's name, does the woman come to on board ship on such a wild-goose venture?" cried Martin.

Mr. Tapley glanced at him for a moment as he lay pe in his berth, and then said, very quietly: —

"Ah! How, indeed! I can't think! He 's been a from her for two years; she 's been very poor and lonel her own country, and has always been a looking forward meeting him. It 's very strange she should be here. C

amazing! A little mad, perhaps! There can't be no other way of accounting for it."

Martin was too far gone in the lassitude of sea-sickness to make any reply to these words, or even to attend to them as they were spoken. And the subject of their discourse returning at this crisis with some hot tea, effectually put a stop to any resumption of the theme by Mr. Tapley; who, when the meal was over and he had adjusted Martin's bed, went up on deck to wash the breakfast service, which consisted of two half-pint tin mugs, and a shaving-pot of the same metal.

It is due to Mark Tapley to state that he suffered at least as much from sea-sickness as any man, woman, or child on board; and that he had a peculiar faculty of knocking himself about on the smallest provocation, and losing his legs at every lurch of the ship. But resolved, in his usual phrase, to "come out strong" under disadvantageous circumstances, he was the life and soul of the steerage, and made no more of stopping in the middle of a facetious conversation to go away and be excessively ill by himself, and afterwards come back in the very best and gayest of tempers to resume it, than if such a course of proceeding had been the commonest in the world.

It cannot be said that as his illness wore off, his cheerfulness and good-nature increased, because they would hardly admit of augmentation; but his usefulness among the weaker members of the party was much enlarged; and at all times and seasons there he was exerting it. If a gleam of sun shone out of the dark sky, down Mark tumbled into the cabin, and presently up he came again with a woman in his arms, or half a dozen children, or a man, or a bed, or a saucepan, or a basket, or something animate or inanimate, that he thought would be the better for the air. If an hour or two of fine weather in the middle of the day tempted those who seldom or never came on deck at other times, to crawl into the long-boat, or lie down upon the spare spars, and try to eat, there in the centre of the group was Mr. Tapley, handing about salt beef and biscuit, or dispensing tastes of grog, or cutting up the children's provisions with his pocket-knife for their greater ease and comfort, or reading aloud from a venerable newspaper, or singing some roaring old song to a select party, or writing the beginnings of letters to their friends at home for people who couldn't write, or cracking jokes with the crew, or nearly get-

wn over the side, or emerging, half-drowned, fr
er of spray, or lending a hand somewhere or other-
's doing something for the general entertainment,
, when the cooking-fire was lighted on the deck, a
ng sparks that flew among the rigging and the cl
seemed to menace the ship with certain annihilati
in case the elements of air and water failed to compa
uction, — there again was Mr. Tapley, with his c
his shirt-sleeves turned up to his elbows, doing all
culinary offices; compounding the strangest dishes;
ed by every one as an established authority; and helpi
ties to achieve something, which left to themselves,
could have done, and never would have dreamed o
, there never was a more popular character than
apley became, on board that noble and fast-sailing li
packet ship, the Screw; and he attained at last to such a
of universal admiration, that he began to have grave
within himself whether a man might reasonably clai
credit for being jolly under such exciting circumstances.

"If this was going to last," said Mr. Tapley, "there
no great difference, as I can perceive, between the Scre
the Dragon. I never *am* to get any credit, I think. I
to be afraid that the Fates is determined to make the
easy to me."

"Well, Mark," said Martin, near whose berth he had
nated to this effect. "When will this be over!"

"Another week, they say, sir," returned Mark, "will
likely bring us into port. The ship's a going along at
ent, as sensible as a ship can, sir; though I don't mean
as that 's any very high praise."

"I don't think it is, indeed," groaned Martin.

"You'd feel all the better for it, sir, if you was to
out," observed Mark.

"And be seen by the ladies and gentlemen on the
deck," returned Martin, with a scornful emphasis upo
words, "mingling with the beggarly crowd that are s
away in this vile hole. I should be greatly the better fo
no doubt!"

"I 'm thankful that I can't say from my own expe
what the feelings of a gentleman may be," said Mark. "
should have thought, sir, as a gentleman would feel a

e uncomfortable down here than up in the fresh air, espe-
ly when the ladies and gentlemen in the after-cabin know
as much about him as he does about them, and are likely
rouble their heads about him in the same proportion. I
ıld have thought that, certainly."

I tell you, then," rejoined Martin, "you would have
ıght wrong, and do think wrong."

Very likely, sir," said Mark, with imperturbable good-tem-
"I often do."

As to lying here," cried Martin, raising himself on his
w, and looking angrily at his follower, "do you suppose
a pleasure to lie here?"

All the madhouses in the world," said Mr. Tapley, "could n't
luce such a maniac as the man must be who could think
."

Then why are you for ever goading and urging me to get
" asked Martin. "I lie here because I don't wish to be
gnised, in the better days to which I aspire, by any purse-
ıd citizen, as the man who came over with him among the
rage passengers. I lie here because I wish to conceal my
ımstances and myself, and not to arrive in a new world
ged and ticketed as an utterly poverty-stricken man. If I
d have afforded a passage in the after-cabin, I should have
up my head with the rest. As I could n't, I hide it. Do
understand that?"

I am very sorry, sir," said Mark. "I did n't know you
it so much to heart as this comes to."

Of course you did n't know," returned his master. "How
ıld you know, unless I told you? It 's no trial to *you*,
k, to make yourself comfortable and to bustle about. It 's
atural for you to do so under the circumstances as it is for
not to do so. Why, you don't suppose there is a living
ture in this ship who can by possibility have half so much
ndergo on board of her as *I* have? Do you?" he asked,
ng upright in his berth and looking at Mark, with an ex-
sion of great earnestness not unmixed with wonder.

Mark twisted his face into a tight knot, and with his head
much on one side pondered upon this question as if he felt
n extremely difficult one to answer. He was relieved from
embarrassment by Martin himself, who said, as he stretched
self upon his back again and resumed the book he had been
ling:—

what is the use of my putting such a case to you, w
very essence of what I have been saying is that you ca
possibility understand it! Make me a little brandy-
r — cold and very weak — and give me a biscuit, and
friend, who is a nearer neighbour of ours than I
, to try and keep her children a little quieter to-night
did last night; that 's a good fellow."

. Tapley set himself to obey these orders with great
and pending their execution, it may be presumed his
spirits revived; inasmuch as he several times obse
w his breath, that in respect of its power of impart
dit to jollity, the Screw unquestionably had some de
antages over the Dragon. He also remarked that it
gratification to him to reflect that he would carry its
excellence ashore with him, and have it constantly beside
wherever he went; but what he meant by these consol
thoughts he did not explain.

And now a general excitement began to prevail on b
and various predictions relative to the precise day, and eve
precise hour, at which they would reach New York were f
broached. There was infinitely more crowding on deck
looking over the ship's side than there had been before a
epidemic broke out for packing up things every morning
required unpacking again every night. Those who had
letters to deliver, or any friends to meet, or any settled
of going anywhere or doing anything, discussed their pro
a hundred times a day; and as this class of passengers was
small, and the number of those who had no prospects wha
was very large, there were plenty of listeners and few ta
Those who had been ill all along got well now, and those
had been well got better. An American gentleman in the
cabin, who had been wrapped up in fur and oilskin the
passage, unexpectedly appeared in a very shiny, tall, bla
and constantly overhauled a very little valise of pale
which contained his clothes, linen, brushes, shaving appar
books, trinkets, and other baggage. He likewise stuck
hands deep into his pockets, and walked the deck with his
trils dilated, as already inhaling the air of Freedom which
ries death to all tyrants, and can never (under any circumst
worth mentioning) be breathed by slaves. An English ge
man who was strongly suspected of having run away fr

;h something in his possession belonging to its strong
les the key, grew eloquent upon the subject of the
man, and hummed the Marseillaise Hymn constantly.
d, one great sensation pervaded the whole ship, and
f America lay close before them; so close at last, that,
rtain starlight night, they took a pilot on board, and
few hours afterwards lay to until the morning, await-
rival of a steamboat in which the passengers were to
ed ashore.

came, soon after it was light next morning, and, lying
an hour or more — during which period her very fire-
objects of hardly less interest and curiosity than if
been so many angels, good or bad — took all her liv-
ht aboard. Among them, Mark, who still had his
d her three children under his close protection; and
who had once more dressed himself in his usual attire,
a soiled, old cloak above his ordinary clothes, until
as he should separate for ever from his late compan-

eamer — which, with its machinery on deck, looked,
ed its long slim legs, like some enormously magnified
antediluvian monster — dashed at great speed up a
bay, and presently they saw some heights, and islands,
g, flat, straggling city.

this," said Mr. Tapley, looking far ahead, "is the
Liberty, is it? Very well. I'm agreeable. Any
do for me after so much water!"

## CHAPTER XVI

N DISEMBARKS FROM THAT NOBLE AND FAST-SAILIN
PACKET SHIP, THE SCREW, AT THE PORT OF NEW Y
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: HE MAKES SOME ACQ
ANCES, AND DINES AT A BOARDING-HOUSE; THE PARTIC
OF THOSE TRANSACTIONS.

SOME trifling excitement prevailed upon the very bri
margin of the land of liberty; for an alderman had been
the day before; and Party Feeling naturally running rath
on such an exciting occasion, the friends of the disap
candidate had found it necessary to assert the great princ
Purity of Election and Freedom of Opinion by breaking
legs and arms, and furthermore pursuing one obnoxious
man through the streets with the design of slitting h.
These good-humoured little outbursts of the popular fan
not in themselves sufficiently remarkable to create an
stir, after the lapse of a whole night, but they found fo
and notoriety in the breath of the newsboys, who a
proclaimed them with shrill yells in all the highways a
ways of the town, upon the wharves and among the st
but on the deck and down in the cabins of the ste
which, before she touched the shore, was boarded and
by a legion of those young citizens.

"Here 's this morning's New York Sewer!" cri
"Here 's this morning's New York Stabber! Here 's t
York Family Spy! Here 's the New York Private L
Here 's the New York Peeper! Here 's the New Yor
derer! Here 's the New York Keyhole Reporter! Her
New York Rowdy Journal! Here 's all the New York
Here 's full particulars of the patriotic bowie-knife movem
terday, in which the Whigs was so chawed up, and t
Alabama gouging case; and the interesting Arkansas duc
Bowie knives; and all the Political, Commercial, and F
able News. Here they are! Here they are! Here 's
pers, here 's the papers!"

'Here 's the Sewer!" cried another. "Here 's the New k Sewer! Here 's some of the twelfth thousand of to-day's er, with the best accounts of the markets, and all the ship- news, and four whole columns of country correspondence, a full account of the Ball at Mrs. White's last night, where the beauty and fashion of New York was assembled; with Sewer's own particulars of the private lives of all the ladies was there! Here 's the Sewer! Here 's some of the fth thousand of the New York Sewer! Here 's the Sew- exposure of the Wall Street Gang, and the Sewer's ex- re of the Washington Gang, and the Sewer's exclusive unt of a flagrant act of dishonesty committed by the Secre- of State when he was eight years old; now communicated, great expense, by his own nurse. Here 's the Sewer! 's the New York Sewer, in its twelfth thousand, with a le column of New Yorkers to be shown up, and all their es printed! Here 's the Sewer's article upon the Judge tried him, day afore yesterday, for libel, and the Sewer's te to the independent Jury that did n't convict him, and Sewer's account of what they might have expected if they

Here 's the Sewer, here 's the Sewer! Here 's the awake Sewer, always on the lookout; the leading Jour- f the United States, now in its twelfth thousand, and still nting off. — Here 's the New York Sewer!"

It is in such enlightened means," said a voice almost in in's ear, "that the bubbling passions of my country find nt."

artin turned involuntarily, and saw, standing close at his a sallow gentleman, with sunken cheeks, black hair, small kling eyes, and a singular expression hovering about that n of his face, which was not a frown nor a leer, and yet t have been mistaken at the first glance for either. In- it would have been difficult, on a much closer acquain- , to describe it in any more satisfactory terms than as a d expression of vulgar cunning and conceit. This gentle- wore a rather broad-brimmed hat for the greater wisdom is appearance; and had his arms folded for the greater assiveness of his attitude. He was somewhat shabbily ed in a blue surtout reaching nearly to his ankles, short trousers of the same colour, and a faded buff waistcoat, ugh which a discoloured shirt-frill struggled to force itself

ce, as asserting an equality of civil rights wit
r portions of his dress, and maintaining a declarati
ependence on its own account. His feet, which w
nusually large proportions, were leisurely crossed befo
as he half leaned against, half sat upon, the steamboat's
wark; and his thick cane, shod with a mighty ferule a
end and armed with a great metal knob at the other, dep
from a line-and-tassel on his wrist. Thus attired, and
composed into an aspect of great profundity, the gent
twitched up the right-hand corner of his mouth and his
eye simultaneously, and said, once more: —

"It is in such enlightened means that the bubbling pa
of my country find a vent."

As he looked at Martin, and nobody else was by, h
inclined his head, and said: —

"You allude to —"

**"To the Palladium of rational Liberty at home, sir, a**
**dread of Foreign oppression abroad," returned the gentl**
as he pointed with his cane to an uncommonly dirty ne
with one eye. "To the Envy of the world, sir, and the
ers of Human Civilisation. Let me ask you, sir," he
bringing the ferule of his stick heavily upon the deck wi
air of a man who must not be equivocated with, "how d
like my Country!"

"I am hardly prepared to answer that question yet,"
Martin, "seeing that I have not been ashore."

"Well, I should expect you were not prepared, sir,"
the gentleman, "to behold such signs of National Pros
as those!"

He pointed to the vessels lying at the wharves and
gave a vague flourish with his stick, as if he would include
air and water generally in this remark.

"Really," said Martin, "I don't know. Yes — I th
was."

The gentleman glanced at him with a knowing look
said he liked his policy. It was natural, he said, a
pleased him as a philosopher to observe the prejudices of h
nature.

"You have brought, I see, sir," he said, turning
towards Martin, and resting his chin on the top of his
"the usual amount of misery and poverty, and igno-ance

ne, to be located in the bosom of the Great Republic. ll, sir! let 'em come on in ship-loads from the old country. en vessels are about to founder, the rats are said to leave . There is considerable of truth, I find, in that remark."

'The old ship will keep afloat a year or two longer yet, per- ," said Martin with a smile, partly occasioned by what the tleman said, and partly by his manner of saying it, which odd enough, for he emphasized all the small words and ables in his discourse, and left the others to take care of mselves; as if he thought the larger parts of speech could trusted alone, but the little ones required to be constantly ed after.

'Hope is said by the poet, sir," observed the gentleman, be the nurse of Young Desire."

Martin signified that he had heard of the cardinal virtue in stion serving occasionally in that domestic capacity.

'She will not rear her infant in the present instance, sir, 'll find," observed the gentleman.

'Time will show," said Martin.

The gentleman nodded his head gravely, and said, "What our name, sir?"

Martin told him.

'How old are you, sir?"

Martin told him.

'What is your profession, sir?"

Martin told him that, also.

'What is your destination, sir?" inquired the gentleman.

'Really," said Martin laughing, "I can't satisfy you in that icular, for I don't know it myself."

'Yes?" said the gentleman.

'No," said Martin.

The gentleman adjusted his cane under his left arm, and a more deliberate and complete survey of Martin than he yet had leisure to make. When he had completed his ection, he put out his right hand, shook Martin's hand, said: —

'My name is Colonel Diver, sir. I am the Editor of the w York Rowdy Journal."

Martin received the communication with that degree of ect which an announcement so distinguished appeared to and.

New York Rowdy Journal, sir," resumed the co
— I expect you know, the organ of our aristocracy i
."

"Oh! there *is* an aristocracy here, then?" said M
"Of what is it composed?"

"Of intelligence, sir," replied the colonel; "of intell
and virtue. And of their necessary consequence in this
lic — dollars, sir."

Martin was very glad to hear this, feeling well assure
if intelligence and virtue led, as a matter of course,
acquisition of dollars, he would speedily become a great
talist. He was about to express the gratification such
afforded him, when he was interrupted by the captain
ship, who came up at the moment to shake hands wi
colonel; and who, seeing a well-dressed stranger on the
(for Martin had thrown aside his cloak), shook hands wi
also. This was an unspeakable relief to Martin, who, in
of the acknowledged supremacy of intelligence and vir
that happy country, would have been deeply mortified to
before Colonel Diver in the poor character of a steera
senger.

"Well, cap'en!" said the colonel.

"Well, colonel!" cried the captain. "You 're looking
uncommon bright, sir. I can hardly realise its being y
that 's a fact."

"A good passage, cap'en!" inquired the colonel, taki
aside.

"Well now! It was a pretty spanking run, sir," a
rather sung, the captain, who was a genuine New Engl
"con-sidern' the weather."

"Yes!" said the colonel.

"Well! It was, sir," said the captain. "I 've jes
sent a boy up to your office with the passenger-list, o i a

"You haven't got another boy to spare, p'raps, cap
said the colonel, in a tone almost amounting to severity

"I guess there air a dozen if you want 'em, colonel
the captain.

"One moderate boy 'un could convey a dozen of cha
perhaps," observed the colonel musing, "to my office.
said a spanking run, I think!"

"Well! so I did," was the reply.

s very nigh, you know," observed the colonel. "I 'm
was a spanking run, cap'en. Don't mind about quarts
re short of 'em. The boy can as well bring four-and-
pints, and travel twice as once. — A first-rate spanker,
was it? Yes?"
nost e—tarnal spanker," said the skipper.
dmire at your good fortun', cap'en. You might loan
orkscrew at the same time, and half a dozen glasses if
ed. However bad the elements combine against my
's noble packet-ship the Screw, sir," said the colonel,
to Martin, and drawing a flourish on the surface of the
th his cane, "her passage either way is almost certain
tuate a spanker!"
captain, who had the Sewer below at that moment,
g expensively in one cabin, while the amiable Stabber
aking himself into a state of blind madness in another,
cordial leave of his friend the colonel, and hurried away
atch the champagne; well knowing (as it afterwards
d) that if he failed to conciliate the editor of the Rowdy
, that potentate would denounce him and his ship in
ıpitals before he was a day older; and would probably
the memory of his mother also, who had not been dead
ıan twenty years. The colonel being again left alone
artin, checked him as he was moving away, and offered,
deration of his being an Englishman, to show him the
nd to introduce him, if such were his desire, to a gen-
ırding-house. But before they entered on these pro-
s (he said), he would beseech the honour of his com-
the office of the Rowdy Journal, to partake of a bottle
pagne of his own importation.
his was so extremely kind and hospitable, that Martin,
it was quite early in the morning, readily acquiesced.
ructing Mark, who was deeply engaged with his friend
three children, that when he had done assisting them,
l cleared the baggage, he was to wait for further orders
Rowdy Journal Office, Martin accompanied his new
n shore.
made their way as they best could through the melan-
rowd of emigrants upon the wharf — who, grouped
heir beds and boxes, with the bare ground below them
bare sky above, might have fallen from another planet,

ning they knew of the country — and walked for
ers distance along a busy street bounded on one side b
quays and shipping; and on the other by a long row of
ed-brick storehouses and offices, ornamented with num
boards and white letters, and more white boards and
letters, than Martin had ever seen before, in fifty tim
space. Presently they turned up a narrow street, and
ently into other narrow streets, until at last they stopped
a house whereon was painted in great characters, "T
JOURNAL."

The colonel, who had walked the whole way with on
in his breast, his head occasionally wagging from side t
and his hat thrown back upon his ears, — like a man w
oppressed to inconvenience by a sense of his own great
led the way up a dark and dirty flight of stairs into a r
similar character, all littered and bestrewn with odds an
of newspapers and other crumpled fragments, both in
and manuscript. Behind a mangy old writing-table i
apartment sat a figure with a stump of a pen in its mou
a great pair of scissors in its right hand, clipping and
at a file of Rowdy Journals; and it was such a laughable
that Martin had some difficulty in preserving his g
though conscious of the close observation of Colonel Div

The individual who sat clipping and slicing as af
at the Rowdy Journals was a small young gentleman
juvenile appearance and unwholesomely pale in the face
perhaps, from intense thought, but partly, there is re
from the excessive use of tobacco, which he was at th
ment chewing vigorously. He wore his shirt-collar
down over a black ribbon, and his lank hair — a fragm
— was not only smoothed and parted back from his bro
none of the Poetry of his aspect might be lost, but ha
and there, been grubbed up by the roots, which accoun
his loftiest developments being somewhat pimply. H
that order of nose on which the envy of mankind has be
the appellation "snub," and it was very much turned up
end, as with a lofty scorn. Upon the upper lip of this
gentleman were tokens of a sandy down — so very, very
and scant, that, though encouraged to the utmost, it
more like a recent trace of gingerbread than the fair p
of a moustache, and this conjecture, his apparently tend

ent far to strengthen. He was intent upon his work. Every me he snapped the great pair of scissors, he made a corre- ɔonding motion with his jaws, which gave him a very terrible ɔpearance.

Martin was not long in determining within himself that this ıust be Colonel Diver's son; the hope of the family, and ıture mainspring of the Rowdy Journal. Indeed he had ɜgun to say that he presumed this was the colonel's little boy, ıd that it was very pleasant to see him playing at Editor in l the guilelessness of childhood, when the colonel proudly terposed, and said: —

"My War Correspondent, sir — Mr. Jefferson Brick!"

Martin could not help starting at this unexpected announce- ɜnt, and the consciousness of the irretrievable mistake he had arly made.

Mr. Brick seemed pleased with the sensation he produced on the stranger, and shook hands with him, with an air of tronage designed to reassure him, and to let him know that ɜre was no occasion to be frightened, for he (Brick) would n't rt him.

"You have heard of Jefferson Brick, I see, sir," quoth the .onel, with a smile. "England has heard of Jefferson Brick. ırope has heard of Jefferson Brick. Let me see. When did u leave England, sir?"

"Five weeks ago," said Martin.

"Five weeks ago," repeated the colonel thoughtfully, as he ɔk his seat upon the table and swung his legs. "Now let ı ask you, sir, which of Mr. Brick's articles had become at ıt time the most obnoxious to the British Parliament and ɜ court of Saint James's?"

"Upon my word," said Martin, "I —"

"I have reason to know, sir," interrupted the colonel, "that ɜ aristocratic circles of your country quail before the name of fferson Brick. I should like to be informed, sir, from your ɜ, which of his sentiments has struck the deadliest blow —"

"At the hundred heads of the Hydra of Corruption now ɔvelling in the dust beneath the lance of Reason, and spout- ɣ up to the universal arch above us its sanguinary gore," id Mr. Brick, putting on a little blue cloth cap with a glazed ınt, and quoting his last article.

"The libation of freedom, Brick," — hinted the colonel.

ist sometimes be quaffed in blood, colonel," s
and when he said "blood," he gave the great pi
s a sharp snap, as if *they* said blood too, and were
opinion.

done, they both looked at Martin, pausing for a re
on my life," said Martin, who had by this time
vered his usual coolness, "I can't give you any satisfa
mation about it; for the truth is that I—"

"Stop!" cried the colonel, glancing sternly at his war
dent, and giving his head one shake after every sent
hat you never heard of Jefferson Brick, sir. That you
d Jefferson Brick, sir. That you never saw the E
rnal, sir. That you never knew, sir, of its mighty infl
on the cabinets of Europe — Yes!"

"That 's what I was about to observe, certainly," said
tin.

"Keep cool, Jefferson," said the colonel gravely. "I
bust! Oh, you Europeans! Arter that, let 's have a gl
wine!" So saying, he got down from the table, and pro
from a basket outside the door, a bottle of champagne,
three glasses.

"Mr. Jefferson Brick, sir," said the colonel, filling Ma
glass and his own, and pushing the bottle to that gent
"will give us a sentiment."

"Well, sir!" cried the war correspondent, "since you
concluded to call upon me, I will respond. I will give you
The Rowdy Journal and its brethren, the well of E
whose waters are black from being composed of printers
but are quite clear enough for my country to behold the sh
of her Destiny reflected in."

"Hear, hear!" cried the colonel, with great cordiality
"There are flowery components, sir, in the language of
friend!"

"Very much so, indeed," said Martin.

"There is to-day's Rowdy, sir," observed the colonel, h
ing him a paper. "You'll find Jefferson Brick at his
post in the van of human civilisation and moral purity."

The colonel was by this time seated on the table a
Mr. Brick also took up a position on that same piece of f
ture, and they fell to drinking pretty hard. They
looked at Martin as he read the paper, and then at each o

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TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

en he laid it down, which was not until they had finished cond bottle, the colonel asked him what he thought of it.

Why, it 's horribly personal," said Martin.

'he colonel seemed much flattered by this remark; and said ıoped it was.

We are independent here, sir," said Mr. Jefferson Brick. e do as we like."

If I may judge from this specimen," returned Martin, ere must be a few thousands here, rather the reverse of pendent, who do as they don't like."

Well! They yield to the mighty mind of the Popular ructor, sir," said the colonel. "They rile up, sometimes; in general we have a hold upon our citizens, both in public in private life, which is as much one of the ennobling itutions of our happy country as — "

As nigger slavery itself," suggested Mr. Brick.

En—tirely so," remarked the colonel.

Pray," said Martin, after some hesitation, "may I venture sk, with reference to a case I observe in this paper of s, whether the Popular Instructor often deals in — I am at ss to express it without giving you offence — in forgery? orged letters, for instance," he pursued, for the colonel was ectly calm and quite at his ease, "solemnly purporting to ; been written at recent periods by living men?"

Well, sir!" replied the colonel. "It does, now and ."

And the popular instructed — what do they do?" asked tin.

Buy 'em!" said the colonel.

Ir. Jefferson Brick expectorated and laughed; the former ously, the latter approvingly.

Buy 'em by hundreds of thousands," resumed the colonel. e are a smart people here, and can appreciate smartness."

Is smartness American for forgery?" asked Martin.

Well!" said the colonel, "I expect it 's American for a l many things that you call by other names. But you t help yourselves in Europe. We can."

And do, sometimes," thought Martin. "You help yourees with very little ceremony, too!"

At all events, whatever name we choose to employ," said colonel, stooping down to roll the third empty bottle into

himself by spitting alternately into the spittoon on the right hand of the stove, and the spittoon on the left, and then working his way back again in the same order. A negro lad in a soiled white jacket was busily engaged in placing on the table two long rows of knives and forks, relieved at intervals by jugs of water: and as he travelled down one side of this festive board, he straightened with his dirty hands the dirtier cloth, which was all askew, and had not been removed since breakfast. The atmosphere of this room was rendered intensely hot and stifling by the stove; but being further flavoured by a sickly gush of soup from the kitchen, and by such remote suggestions of tobacco as lingered within the brazen receptacles already mentioned, it became, to a stranger's senses, almost insupportable.

The gentleman in the rocking-chair having his back towards them, and being much engaged in his intellectual pastime, was not aware of their approach until the colonel walking up to the stove, contributed his mite towards the support of the left-hand spittoon, just as the major — for it was the major — bore down upon it. Major Pawkins then reserved his fire, and looking upwards, said, with a peculiar air of quiet weariness, like a man who had been up all night — an air which Martin had already observed both in the colonel and Mr. Jefferson Brick:—

"Well, colonel!"

"Here is a gentleman from England, major," the colonel replied, "who has concluded to locate himself here if the amount of compensation suits him."

"I am glad to see you, sir," observed the major, shaking hands with Martin, and not moving a muscle of his face. "You are pretty bright, I hope?"

"Never better," said Martin.

"You are never likely to be," returned the major. "You will see the sun shine *here*."

"I think I remember to have seen it shine at home, sometimes," said Martin smiling.

"I think not," replied the major. He said so with a stoical indifference certainly, but still in a tone of firmness which admitted of no further dispute on that point. When he had thus settled the question, he put his hat a little on one side for the greater convenience of scratching his head, and saluted Mr. Jefferson Brick with a lazy nod.

of "Pawkins" was engraved; and four accidental pigs looking down the area.

The colonel knocked at this house with the air of a man who lived there; and an Irish girl popped her head out of one of the top windows to see who it was. Pending her journey down stairs, the pigs were joined by two or three friends from the next street, in company with whom they lay down sociably in the gutter.

"Is the major in-doors?" inquired the colonel, as he entered.

"Is it the master, sir?" returned the girl, with a hesitation which seemed to imply that they were rather flush of majors in that establishment.

"The master!" said Colonel Diver, stopping short and looking round at his war correspondent.

"Oh! The depressing institutions of that British empire, colonel!" said Jefferson Brick. "Master!"

"What 's the matter with the word?" asked Martin.

"I should hope it was never heard in our country, sir, that 's all," said Jefferson Brick; "except when it is used by some degraded Help, as new to the blessings of our form of government as this Help is. There are no masters here."

"All 'owners,' are they?" said Martin.

Mr. Jefferson Brick followed in the Rowdy Journal's footsteps without returning any answer. Martin took the same course, thinking as he went that perhaps the free and independent citizens, who, in their moral elevation, owned the colonel for their master, might render better homage to the goddess, Liberty, in nightly dreams upon the oven of a Russian Serf.

The colonel led the way into a room at the back of the house upon the ground-floor, light, and of fair dimensions, but exquisitely uncomfortable; having nothing in it but the four cold white walls and ceiling, a mean carpet, a dreary waste of dining-table reaching from end to end, and a bewildering collection of cane-bottomed chairs. In the further region of this banqueting-hall was a stove, garnished on either side with a great brass spittoon, and shaped in itself like three little iron barrels set up on end in a fender, and joined together on the principle of the Siamese Twins. Before it, swinging himself in a rocking-chair, lounged a large gentleman with his hat on, who amused

r spitting alternately into the spittoon on the
the stove, and the spittoon on the left, and then
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Major Pawkins (a gentleman of Pennsylvanian origin) was stinguished by a very large skull, and a great mass of yellow rehead; in deference to which commodities it was currently ld, in bar-rooms and other such places of resort, that the ajor was a man of huge sagacity. He was further to be own by a heavy eye and a dull slow manner; and for being man of that kind who — mentally speaking — requires a deal room to turn himself in. But, in trading on his stock of isdom, he invariably proceeded on the principle of putting all e goods he had (and more) into his window; and that went great way with his constituency of admirers. It went a eat way, perhaps, with Mr. Jefferson Brick, who took occaon to whisper in Martin's ear: —

"One of the most remarkable men in our country, sir!"

It must not be supposed, however, that the perpetual exhition in the market-place of all his stock-in-trade for sale or re was the major's sole claim to a very large share of symthy and support. He was a great politician; and the one ticle of his creed, in reference to all public obligations involvg the good faith and integrity of his country was, "Run a ost pen slick through everything, and start fresh." This de him a patriot. In commercial affairs he was a bold eculator. In plainer words he had a most distinguished nius for swindling, and could start a bank, or negotiate a an, or form a land-jobbing company (entailing ruin, pestiice, and death on hundreds of families), with any gifted ature in the Union. This made him an admirable man of siness. He could hang about a bar-room discussing the airs of the nation for twelve hours together; and in that ne could hold forth with more intolerable dulness, chew ore tobacco, smoke more tobacco, drink more rum-toddy, int-julep, gin-sling, and cock-tail, than any private gentlean of his acquaintance. This made him an orator and a man the people. In a word, the major was a rising character d a popular character, and was in a fair way to be sent by e popular party to the State House of New York, if not in e end to Washington itself. But as a man's private prosrity does not always keep pace with his patriotic devotion to blic affairs, and as fraudulent transactions have their downs well as ups, the major was occasionally under a cloud. ence, just now, Mrs. Pawkins kept a boarding-house, and

awkins rather "loafed" his time away, than

"You have come to visit our country, sir, at a

t commercial depression," said the major.

"At an alarming crisis," said the colonel.

"At a period of unprecedented stagnation," said Mr. Je

n Brick.

"I am sorry to hear that," returned Martin. "It's

ly to last, I hope?"

Martin knew nothing about America, or he would

nown perfectly well that if its individual citizens, to a

e to be believed, it always *is* depressed, and always *is*

ated, and always *is* at an alarming crisis, and never was

wise; though as a body they are ready to make oath upon

Evangelists, at any hour of the day or night, that it is the

thriving and prosperous of all countries on the habitable gl

"It 's not likely to last, I hope?" said Martin.

**"Well!" returned the major, "I expect we shall get a** somehow, and come right in the end."

"We are an elastic country," said the Rowdy Journal

"We are a young lion," said Mr. Jefferson Brick.

"We have revivifying and vigorous principles within selves," observed the major. "Shall we drink a bitter dinner, colonel?"

The colonel assenting to this proposal with great alac Major Pawkins proposed an adjournment to a neighbo bar-room, which, as he observed, was "only in the block." He then referred Martin to Mrs. Pawkins fo particulars connected with the rate of board and lodging informed him that he would have the pleasure of seeing lady at dinner, which would soon be ready, as the dinner was two o'clock, and it only wanted a quarter now reminded him that if the latter were to be taken at all, t was no time to lose; so he walked off without more cer left them to follow if they thought proper.

When the major rose from his rocking-chair before the and so disturbed the hot air and balmy whiff of may w fanned their brows, the odour of stale tobacco became so d eily prevalent as to leave no doubt of its proceeding fr from that gentleman's attire. Indeed, as Martin walked hind him to the bar-room, he could not help thinking that

eat square major, in his listlessness and languor, looked very uch like a stale weed himself; such as might be hoed out of ıe public garden, with great advantage to the decent growth that preserve, and tossed on some congenial dunghill.

They encountered more weeds in the bar-room, some of hom (being thirsty souls as well as dirty) were pretty stale in ıe sense and pretty fresh in another. Among them was a ıntleman who, as Martin gathered from the conversation that ok place over the bitter, started that afternoon for the Far 'est on a six months' business tour; and who, as his outfit ıd equipment for this journey, had just such another shiny ıt and just such another little pale valise as had composed ıe luggage of the gentleman who came from England in the rew.

They were walking back very leisurely; Martin arm-in-arm ith Mr. Jefferson Brick, and the major and the colonel side r side before them; when, as they came within a house or ro of the major's residence, they heard a bell ringing vio- ntly. The instant this sound struck upon their ears, the lonel and the major darted off, dashed up the steps and in at .e street-door (which stood ajar) like lunatics; while Mr. efferson Brick, detaching his arm from Martin's, made a pre- pitate dive in the same direction, and vanished also.

"Good Heaven!" thought Martin, "the premises are on e! it was an alarm-bell!"

But there was no smoke to be seen, nor any flame, nor was there ıy smell of fire. As Martin faltered on the pavement, three ore gentlemen, with horror and agitation depicted in their ces, came plunging wildly round the street corner; jostled ch other on the steps, struggled for an instant, and rushed to the house, in a confused heap of arms and legs. Unable bear it any longer, Martin followed. Even in his rapid ogress he was run down, thrust aside, and passed, by two ore gentlemen, stark mad, as it appeared, with fierce excite- ent.

"Where is it?" cried Martin breathlessly, to a negro whom encountered in the passage.

"In a eatin' room, sa. Kernel, sa, him kep' a seat 'side imself, sa."

"A seat!" cried Martin.

"For a dinnar, sa."

stared at him for a moment, and burst into a l
which the negro, out of his natural good-hum
to please, so heartily responded, that his teeth
eam of light. "You 're the pleasantest fellow I
," said Martin, clapping him on the back, "and
tter appetite than bitters."

With this sentiment he walked into the dining-room
d into a chair next the colonel, which that gentlema
time nearly through his dinner) had turned dow
ve for him, with its back against the table.

was a numerous company — eighteen or twenty, pe
these some five or six were ladies, who sat wedged to
a little phalanx by themselves. All the knives and
were working away at a rate that was quite alarming; ver
words were spoken, and everybody seemed to eat his v
in self-defence, as if a famine were expected to set in
breakfast time to-morrow morning, and it had become
time to assert the first law of nature. The poultry,
may perhaps be considered to have formed the staple
entertainment — for there was a turkey at the top, a p
ducks at the bottom, and two fowls in the middle —
peared as rapidly as if every bird had had the use of its
and had flown in desperation down a human throat.
oysters, stewed and pickled, leaped from their capacious
voirs, and slid by scores into the mouths of the ass
The sharpest pickles vanished, whole cucumbers at one
sugar-plums, and no man winked his eye. Great he
indigestible matter melted away as ice before the sun.
a solemn and an awful thing to see. Dyspeptic indiv
bolted their food in wedges, — feeding, not themselves
broods of nightmares, who were continually starting u
within them. Spare men, with lank and rigid cheeks,
out unsatisfied from the destruction of heavy dishes, and
with watchful eyes upon the pastry. What Mrs. Pawn
each day at dinner-time is hidden from all human ken
But she had one comfort. It was very soon over.

When the colonel had finished his dinner, which even
place while Martin, who had sent his plate for some t
was waiting to begin, he asked him what he thought
boarders, who were from all parts of the Union, and wi
he would like to know any particulars concerning them.

"Pray," said Martin, "who is that sickly little girl opposite, with the tight round eyes? I don't see anybody here, who looks like her mother, or who seems to have charge of her."

"Do you mean the matron in blue, sir?" asked the colonel, with emphasis. "That is Mrs. Jefferson Brick, sir."

"No, no," said Martin, "I mean the little girl, like a doll — directly opposite."

"Well, sir!" cried the colonel. "*That* is Mrs. Jefferson Brick."

Martin glanced at the colonel's face, but he was quite serious.

"Bless my soul! I suppose there will be a young Brick then, one of these days?" said Martin.

"There are two young Bricks already, sir," returned the colonel.

The matron looked so uncommonly like a child herself, that Martin could not help saying as much. "Yes, sir," returned the colonel, "but some institutions develop human natur; others re—tard it."

"Jefferson Brick," he observed after a short silence, in commendation of his correspondent, "is one of the most remarkable men in our country, sir!"

This had passed almost in a whisper, for the distinguished gentleman alluded to sat on Martin's other hand.

"Pray, Mr. Brick," said Martin turning to him, and asking a question more for conversation's sake than from any feeling of interest in its subject, "who is that" he was going to say "young" but thought it prudent to eschew the word — "that very short gentleman yonder, with the red nose?"

"That is Pro—fessor Mullit, sir," replied Jefferson.

"May I ask what he is Professor of?" asked Martin.

"Of education, sir," said Jefferson Brick.

"A sort of schoolmaster, possibly?" Martin ventured to observe.

"He is a man of fine moral elements, sir, and not commonly endowed," said the war correspondent. "He felt it necessary, at the last election for President, to repudiate and denounce his father, who voted on the wrong interest. He has since written some powerful pamphlets, under the signature of 'Suturb,' or Brutus reversed. He is one of the most remarkable men in our country, sir."

, seem to be plenty of 'em," thought Martin, "a

r."

Pursuing his inquiries, Martin found that there wer
er than four majors present, two colonels, one general
aptain, so that he could not help thinking how ste
ered the American militia must be; and wondering
much whether the officers commanded each other, or if
did not, where on earth the privates came from. There w
o be no man there without a title — for those who ha
attained to military honours were either doctors, profess
reverends. Three very hard and disagreeable gentlemen
n missions from neighbouring States; one on monetary a
ne on political, one on sectarian. Among the ladies,
were Mrs. Pawkins, who was very straight, bony, and
and a wiry-faced old damsel, who held strong sentiments
ing the rights of women and had diffused the same in he
but the rest were strangely devoid of individual traits of
acter, insomuch that any one of them might have ch
minds with the other and nobody would have found it
These, by the way, were the only members of the party
did not appear to be among the most remarkable pe ple
country.

Several of the gentlemen got up, one by one, and walk
as they swallowed their last morsel; pausing generally
stove for a minute or so to refresh themselves at the
toons. A few sedentary characters, however, remained at
full a quarter of an hour, and did not rise until the ladies
when all stood up.

"Where are they going?" asked Martin, in the ear o
Jefferson Brick.

"To their bedrooms, sir."

"Is there no dessert, or other interval of conversati
asked Martin, who was disposed to enjoy himself after his
voyage.

"We are a busy people here, sir, and have no tim
that," was the reply.

So the ladies passed out in single file. Mr Jefferson
and such other married gentlemen as were left, acknowle
the departure of their other halves by a nod, and there w
of *them*. Martin thought this an uncomfortable co
kept his opinion to himself for the present, being

ms to hear, and inform himself by, the conversation of the usy gentlemen, who now lounged about the stove, as if a great eight had been taken off their minds by the withdrawal of he other sex; and who made a plentiful use of the spittoons nd their toothpicks.

It was rather barren of interest, to say the truth; and the reater part of it may be summed up in one word — dollars. ll their cares, hopes, joys, affections, virtues, and associaons, seemed to be melted down into dollars. Whatever the hance contributions that fell into the slow cauldron of their lk, they made the gruel thick and slab with dollars. Men ere weighed by their dollars, measures gauged by their dolrs; life was auctioneered, appraised, put up, and knocked own for its dollars. The next respectable thing to dollars as any venture having their attainment for its end. The ore of that worthless ballast, honour and fair dealing, which ny man cast overboard from the ship of his Good Name and ood Intent, the more ample stowage-room he had for dollars. ake commerce one huge lie and mighty theft. Deface the nner of the nation for an idle rag; pollute it star by star; nd cut out stripe by stripe as from the arm of a degraded solier. Do anything for dollars! What is a flag to *them!*

One who rides at all hazards of limb and life in the chase f a fox will prefer to ride recklessly at most times. So it as with these gentlemen. He was the greatest patriot, in eir eyes, who brawled the loudest, and who cared the least or decency. He was their champion who, in the brutal fury f his own pursuit, could cast no stigma upon them for the ot knavery of theirs. Thus Martin learned in the five mintes' straggling talk about the stove, that to carry pistols into egislative assemblies, and swords in sticks, and other such eaceful toys; to seize opponents by the throat, as dogs or rats ight do; to bluster, bully, and overbear by personal assailent, were glowing deeds. Not thrusts and stabs at Freedom, triking far deeper into her House of Life than any sultan's cimitar could reach; but rare incense on her altars, having a rateful scent in patriotic nostrils, and curling upward to the venth heaven of Fame.

Once or twice, when there was a pause, Martin asked such questions as naturally occurred to him, being a stranger, about he national poets, the theatre, literature, and the arts. But

nation which these gentlemen were in a condit
nim on such topics, did not extend beyond the effu
uch master-spirits of the time as Colonel Diver, Mr.
n Brick, and others; renowned, as it appeared, for e
in the achievement of a peculiar style of broadside-
l "a screamer."

"We are a busy people, sir," said one of the captains,
as from the West, "and have no time for reading mo
s. We don't mind 'em if they come to us in newsp
with almighty strong stuff of another sort, but darn
."

ere the general, who appeared to grow quite faint at the
ught of reading anything which was neither mercantile
itical, and was not in a newspaper, inquired "if any ge
man would drink some?" Most of the company, consid
this a very choice and seasonable idea, lounged out, ea
one, to the bar-room in the next block. Thence they pro
went to their stores and counting-houses; thence to the
room again, to talk once more of dollars, and enlarge t
minds with the perusal and discussion of newspapers and to
each man to snore in the bosom of his own family.

"Which would seem," said Martin, pursuing the course
his own thoughts, "to be the principal recreation they e
in common." With that, he fell a musing again on
demagogues, and bar-rooms; debating within himself w
busy people of this class were really as busy as they ca
be, or only had an inaptitude for social and domestic pleas

It was a difficult question to solve; and the more fa
being strongly presented to his mind by all that he had
and heard was not encouraging. He sat down at the lo
board, and becoming more and more despondent, as he th
of all the uncertainties and difficulties of his present si
tion, sighed heavily.

Now there had been at the dinner-table a middle-aged
with a dark eye and a sunburnt face, who had attracted
tin's attention by having something very engaging and b
in the expression of his features, but of whom he could
nothing from either of his neighbours, who seemed to co
him quite beneath their notice. He had taken no part in
conversation round the stove, nor had he gone forth with
rest; and now, when he heard Martin sigh for the thir

fourth time, he interposed with some casual remark, as if he desired, without obtruding himself upon a stranger's notice, to engage him in cheerful conversation if he could. His motive was so obvious, and yet so delicately expressed, that Martin felt really grateful to him, and showed him so, in the manner of his reply.

"I will not ask you," said this gentleman with a smile, as he rose and moved towards him, "how you like my country, for I can quite anticipate your feeling on that point. But, as I am an American, and consequently bound to begin with a question, I 'll ask you how you like the colonel?"

"You are so very frank," returned Martin, "that I have no hesitation in saying I don't like him at all. Though I must add that I am beholden to him for his civility in bringing me here — and arranging for my stay, on pretty reasonable terms, by the way," he added; remembering that the colonel had whispered him to that effect before going out.

"Not much beholden," said the stranger drily. "The colonel occasionally boards packet-ships, I have heard, to glean the latest information for his journal; and he occasionally brings strangers to board here, I believe, with a view to the little percentage which attaches to those good offices; and which the hostess deducts from his weekly bill. I don't offend you, I hope?" he added, seeing that Martin reddened.

"My dear sir," returned Martin, as they shook hands, "how is that possible! to tell you the truth, I — am — "

"Yes?" said the gentleman, sitting down beside him.

"I am rather at a loss, since I must speak plainly," said Martin, getting the better of his hesitation, "to know how this colonel escapes being beaten."

"Well! He has been beaten once or twice," remarked the gentleman quietly. "He is one of a class of men, in whom our own Franklin, so long ago as ten years before the close of the last century, foresaw our danger and disgrace. Perhaps you don't know that Franklin, in very severe terms, published his opinion that those who were slandered by such fellows as this colonel, having no sufficient remedy in the administration of this country's laws or in the decent and right-minded feeling of its people, were justified in retorting on such public nuisances by means of a stout cudgel?"

"I was not aware of that," said Martin, "but I am very glad

and I think it worthy of his memory; especially"
sitated again.
said the other smiling, as if he knew what stuck
throat.
ally," pursued Martin, "as I can already understand
y have required great courage, even in his time, to
ely on any question which was not a party one in this
country."
e courage, no doubt," returned his new friend. "Do
k it would require any to do so, now?"
ed I think it would; and not a little," said Martin.
are right. So very right, that I believe no satirist
eathe this air. If another Juvenal or Swift could rise
g us to-morrow, he would be hunted down. If you
y knowledge of our literature, and can give me the
any man, American born and bred, who has amused our follies as a people and not as this or that party, and has escaped the foulest and most brutal slander, the most inveterate hatred and intolerant pursuit, it will be a strange name in my ears, believe me. In some cases I could name to you, where a native writer has ventured on the most harmless and good-humoured illustrations of our vices or defects, it has been found necessary to announce that in a second edition the passage has been expunged, or altered, or explained away, or patched into praise."

"And how has this been brought about?" asked Martin, in dismay.

"Think of what you have seen and heard to-day, begin with the colonel," said his friend, "and ask yourself. How *they* came about is another question. Heaven forbid that they should be samples of the intelligence and virtue of America, but they come uppermost, and in great numbers too, and so often represent it. Will you walk?"

There was a cordial candour in his manner, and an engaging confidence that it would not be abused, a manly bearing on his own part, and a simple reliance on the manly faith of a stranger, which Martin had never seen before. He linked his arm readily in that of the American gentleman, and they walked out together.

It was perhaps to men like this, his new companion, that a traveller of honoured name, who trod those shores not

arly forty years ago, and woke upon that soil, as many have ne since, to blots and stains upon its high pretensions, which the brightness of his distant dreams were lost to view, pealed in these words: —

> "Oh but for such, Columbia's days were done;
> Rank without ripeness, quickened without sun,
> Crude at the surface, rotten at the core,
> Her fruits would fall before her spring were o'er!"

## CHAPTER XVII

ARTIN ENLARGES HIS CIRCLE OF ACQUAINTANCE; INCREA HIS STOCK OF WISDOM; AND HAS AN EXCELLENT OPPORTU OF COMPARING HIS OWN EXPERIENCES WITH THOSE OF LUK NED OF THE LIGHT SALISBURY, AS RELATED BY HIS FRI MR. WILLIAM SIMMONS.

It was characteristic of Martin, that all this while he l either forgotten Mark Tapley as completely as if there been no such person in existence, or, if for a moment the fig of that gentleman rose before his mental vision, had dismis it as something by no means of a pressing nature, which mi be attended to by and by, and could wait his perfect le But, being now in the streets again, it occurred to him a coming within the bare limits of possibility that Mr Ta might, in course of time, grow tired of waiting at the ti old of the Rowdy Journal Office, so he intimated to his friend, that if they could conveniently walk in that dire he would be glad to get this piece of business off his mi

"And speaking of business," said Martin, "may I ask, order that I may not be behind-hand with questions, whether your occupation holds you to this city, or, like mys you are a visitor here?"

"A visitor," replied his friend. "I was formerly in State of Massachusetts, and reside there still. My home a quiet country town. I am not often in these parts, and my inclination to visit them does not increase with better acquaintance, I assure you."

"You have been abroad?" asked Martin.

"Oh, yes."

"And, like most people who travel, have become more at ever attached to your home and native country," said Mar eyeing him curiously.

"To my home — yes," rejoined his friend. "To my na country as my home — yes, also."

"You imply some reservation," said Martin.

"Well," returned his new friend, "if you ask me whether I came back here with a greater relish for my country's faults; with a greater fondness for those who claim (at the rate of so many dollars a day) to be her friends; with a cooler indifference to the growth of principles among us in respect of public matters and of private dealings between man and man, the advocacy of which, beyond the foul atmosphere of a criminal trial, would disgrace your own Old Bailey lawyers, why, then I answer plainly, No."

"Oh!" said Martin; in so exactly the same key as his friend's No, that it sounded like an echo.

"If you ask me," his companion pursued, "whether I came back here better satisfied with a state of things which broadly divides society into two classes — whereof one, the great mass, asserts a spurious independence, most miserably dependent for its mean existence on the disregard of humanising conventionalities of manner and social custom, so that the coarser a man is, the more distinctly it shall appeal to his taste; while the other, disgusted with the low standard thus set up and made adaptable to everything, takes refuge among the graces and refinements it can bring to bear on private life, and leaves the public weal to such fortune as may betide it in the press and uproar of a general scramble — then again I answer, No."

And again Martin said "Oh!" in the same odd way as before, being anxious and disconcerted; not so much, to say the truth, on public grounds, as with reference to the fading prospects of domestic architecture.

"In a word," resumed the other, "I do not find and cannot believe, and therefore will not allow that we are a model of wisdom, and an example to the world, and the perfection of human reason, and a great deal more to the same purpose, which you may hear any hour in the day, simply because we began our political life with two inestimable advantages."

"What were they?" asked Martin.

"One, that our history commenced at so late a period as to escape the ages of bloodshed and cruelty through which other nations have passed; and so had all the light of their probation, and none of its darkness. The other, that we have a vast territory, and not — as yet — too many people on it. These facts considered, we have done little enough, I think."

tion?" suggested Martin faintly.

y well on that head," said the other, shrugging rs; "still no mighty matter to boast of; for old and despotic countries, too, have done as much, if nd made less noise about it. We shine out bright ison with England, certainly, but here is a very ext You complimented me on my frankness, you kn lded laughing.

Oh! I am not at all astonished at your speaking ly when my country is in question," returned Ma is your plain speaking in reference to your own that s me."

You will not find it a scarce quality here, I assure among the Colonel Divers, and Jefferson Bricks, Pawkinses — though the best of us are something man in Goldsmith's Comedy, who wouldn't suffer body but himself to abuse his master. Come!" he ad "let us talk of something else. You have come here on a design of improving your fortune, I dare say, and I sh grieve to put you out of heart. I am some years older you, besides; and may, on a few trivial points, advise perhaps."

There was not the least curiosity or impertinence in manner of this offer, which was open-hearted, straightfo good-natured. As it was next to impossible that he sh not have his confidence awakened by a deportment so pre sessing and kind, Martin plainly stated what had brought into those parts, and even made the very difficult avo he was poor. He did not say how poor, it must be admi rather throwing off the declaration with an air which m have implied that he had money enough for six months, inst of as many weeks, but poor he said he was, and grateful said he would be, for any counsel that his friend would him.

It would not have been very difficult for any one t but it was particularly easy for Martin, whose perceptions w sharpened by his circumstances, to discern that the strange face grew infinitely longer as the domestic architecture pr was developed. Nor, although he made a great effort to b encouraging as possible, could he prevent his head fr shak once involuntarily, as if it said in the vulgar tongue, spec

own account, "No go!" But he spoke in a cheerful tone, and said that, although there was no such opening as Martin wished in that city, he would make it matter of immediate consideration and inquiry where one was most likely to exist; and then he made Martin acquainted with his name, which was Bevan; and with his profession, which was physic, though he seldom or never practised; and with other circumstances connected with himself and family, which fully occupied the time, until they reached the Rowdy Journal Office.

Mr. Tapley appeared to be taking his ease on the landing of the first-floor; for sounds as of some gentleman established in that region, whistling "Rule Britannia" with all his might and main, greeted their ears before they reached the house. On ascending to the spot from whence this music proceeded, they found him recumbent in the midst of a fortification of luggage, apparently performing his national anthem for the gratification of a grey-haired black man, who sat on one of the outworks (a portmanteau), staring intently at Mark, while Mark, with his head reclining on his hand, returned the compliment in a thoughtful manner, and whistled all the time. He seemed to have recently dined, for his knife, a case-bottle, and certain broken meats in a handkerchief, lay near at hand. He had employed a portion of his leisure in the decoration of the Rowdy Journal door, whereon his own initials now appeared in letters nearly half a foot long, together with the day of the month in smaller type; the whole surrounded by an ornamental border, and looking very fresh and bold.

"I was a'most afraid you was lost, sir!" cried Mark, rising, and stopping the tune at that point where Britons generally are supposed to declare (when it is whistled) that they never, never, never, —

"Nothing gone wrong, I hope, sir?"

"No, Mark. Where 's your friend?"

"The mad woman, sir?" said Mr. Tapley. "Oh! she 's all right, sir."

"Did she find her husband?"

"Yes, sir. Leastways she 's found his remains," said Mark, correcting himself.

"The man 's not dead, I hope?"

"Not altogether dead, sir," returned Mark; "but he 's had more fevers and agues than is quite reconcilable with being

When she did n't see him a waiting for her, I the
u have died herself, I did!"

"Was he not here, then!"

"*He* was n't here. There was a feeble old shadow on
eping down at last, as much like his substance when
owed him, as your shadow, when it 's drawn out to its
nest and longest by the sun, is like you. But it wa
remains, there 's no doubt about that. She took on with
oor thing, as much as if it had been all of him!"

"Had he bought land?" asked Mr. Bevan.

"Ah! He 'd bought land," said Mark, shaking his l
and paid for it, too. Every sort of natural advantage
onnected with it, the agents said; and there certainly was
quite unlimited. No end to the water!"

"It 's a thing he could n't have done without, I supp
observed Martin peevishly.

"Certainly not, sir. There it was, any way; always t
on, and no water-rate. Independent of three or four slim
rivers close by, it varied on the farm from four to six f
in the dry season. He could n't say how deep it was
rainy time, for he never had anything long enough to
with."

"Is this true?" asked Martin of his companion.

"Extremely probable," he answered. "Some Mississ
Missouri lot, I dare say."

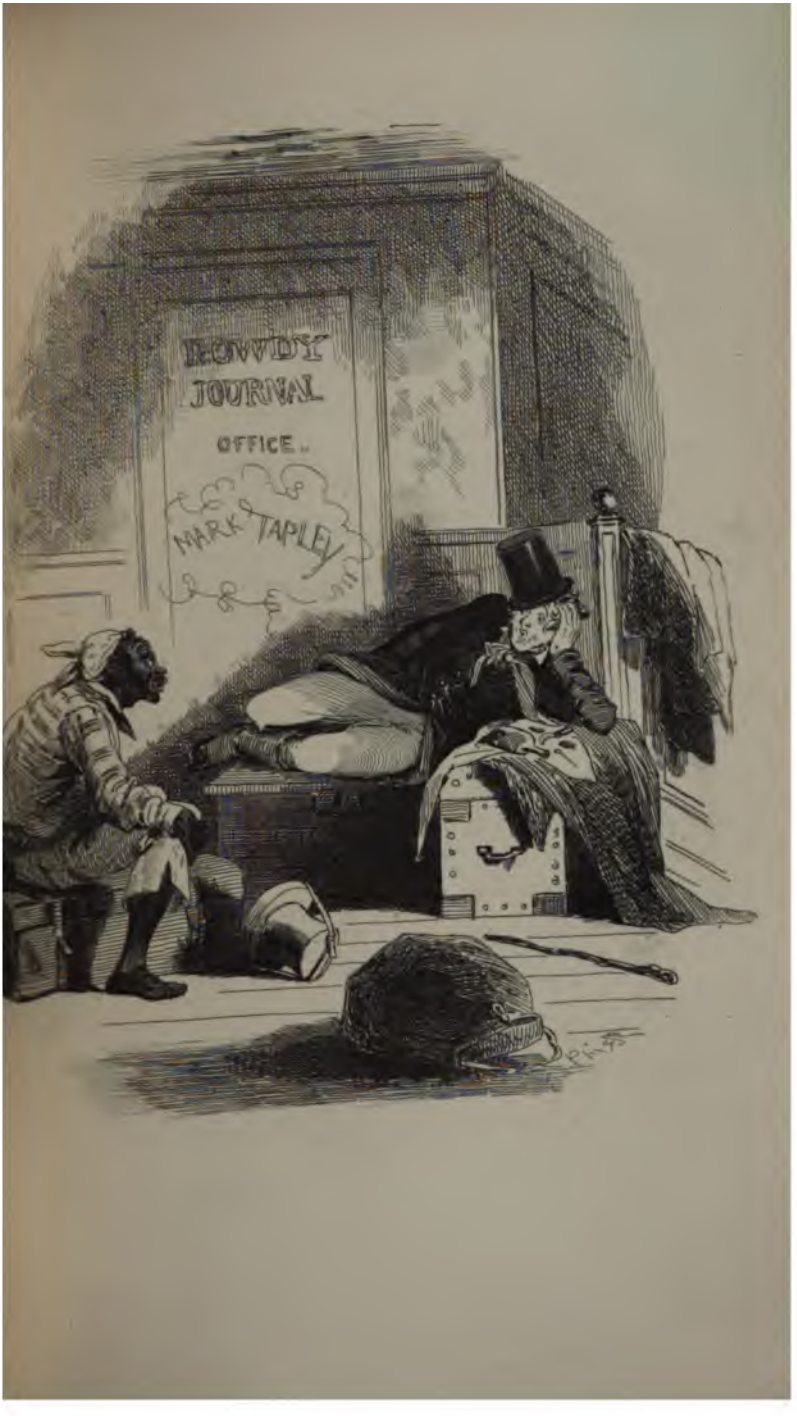
"However," pursued Mark, "he came from I-d-n-t-a
where-and-all, down to New York here, to meet his wi
children, and they started off again in a steamboat this
afternoon, as happy, to be along with each other, as if
were going to Heaven. I should think they was,
straight, if I may judge from the poor man's looks."

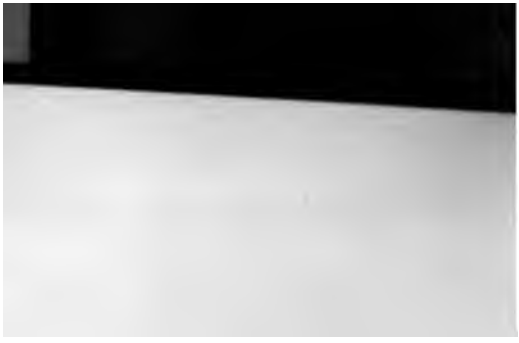
"And may I ask," said Martin, glancing, but not w
displeasure, from Mark to the negro, "who this gentl
Another friend of yours?"

"Why, sir," returned Mark, taking him aside, and spea
confidentially in his ear, "he 's a man of colour, sir."

"Do you take me for a blind man," asked Martin, s
impatiently, "that you think it necessary to tell me that
his face is the blackest that ever was seen?"

"No, no, when I say a man of colour," returned Mark
mean that he 's been one of them as there 's pictures of


ROWDY
JOURNAL
OFFICE
MARK TAPLEY



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R L

ops. A man and a brother, you know, sir," said Mr. Tap-, favouring his master with a significant indication of the ure so often represented in tracts and cheap prints.

"A slave!" cried Martin, in a whisper.

"Ah!" said Mark in the same tone. "Nothing else. A ve. Why, when that there man was young — don't look him, while I 'm a telling it — he was shot in the leg; shed in the arm; scored in his live limbs, like crimped fish; aten out of shape; had his neck galled with an iron collar, d wore iron rings upon his wrists and ankles. The marks on him to this day. When I was having my dinner just w, he stripped off his coat, and took away my appetite."

"Is *this* true?" asked Martin of his friend, who stood side them.

"I have no reason to doubt it," he answered, shaking his ad. "It very often is."

"Bless you," said Mark, "I know it is, from hearing his ole story. That master died; so did his second master from ving his head cut open with a hatchet by another slave, who, en he 'd done it, went and drowned himself; then he got a tter one; in years and years he saved up a little money, and ught his freedom, which he got pretty cheap at last, on count of his strength being nearly gone, and he being ill. en he come here. And now he 's a saving up to treat him-f, afore he dies, to one small purchase — it 's nothing to ak of — only his own daughter; that 's all!" cried Mr. Tap-, becoming excited. "Liberty for ever! Hurrah! Hail lumbia!"

"Hush!" cried Martin, clapping his hand upon his mouth; nd don't be an idiot. What is he doing here?"

"Waiting to take our luggage off upon a truck," said Mark. He 'd have come for it by and by, but I engaged him for a ry reasonable charge — out of my own pocket — to sit along th me and make me jolly; and I *am* jolly; and if I was h enough to contract with him to wait upon me once a day, be looked at, I 'd never be anything else."

The fact may cause a solemn impeachment of Mark's vera-y, but it must be admitted, nevertheless, that there was that his face and manner at the moment which militated strongly ainst this emphatic declaration of his state of mind.

"Lord love you, sir," he added, "they 're so fond of Lib-

is part of the globe that they buy her and sell
carry her to market with 'em. They 've such a p
Liberty that they can't help taking liberties with
t 's what it 's owing to."

"Very well," said Martin, wishing to change the t
having come to that conclusion, Mark, perhaps you 'll
me. The place to which the luggage is to go is print
this card. Mrs. Pawkins's Boarding House."

"Mrs. Pawkins's boarding house," repeated Mark.
Cicero."

"Is that his name?" asked Martin.

"That 's his name, sir," rejoined Mark. And the
grinning assent from under a leathern portmanteau, than
his own face was many shades deeper, hobbled down
with his portion of their worldly goods, Mark Tapley
already gone before with his share.

**Martin and his friend followed them to the door behi**
**were about to pursue their walk, when the latter stopped**
asked, with some hesitation, whether that young man
be trusted.

"Mark! Oh, certainly! with anything."

"You don't understand me, — I think he had better g
us. He is an honest fellow, and speaks his mind
plainly."

"Why, the fact is," said Martin, smiling, "that, be
accustomed to a free republic, he is used to do as
"I think he had better go with us," returned the
"He may get into some trouble otherwise. This
slave States, but I am ashamed to say that a spirit
is not so common anywhere in these latitudes as the
We are not remarkable for behaving very temperately
other when we differ, but to strangers! no, I really th
had better go with us."

Martin called to him immediately to be of their par
Cicero and the trick went one way, and they threw
another.

They walked about the city for two or three hours
it from the best points of view, and passing in the
streets, and before such public buildings as Mr. Bevan
out. Night then coming on apace, Martin proposed tha
should adjourn to Mrs. Pawkins's establishment for

nt in this he was overruled by his new acquaintance, who eemed to have set his heart on carrying him, though it were nly for an hour, to the house of a friend of his who lived ard by. Feeling (however disinclined he was, being weary) iat it would be in bad taste, and not very gracious, to object iat he was unintroduced, when this open-hearted gentleman 'as so ready to be his sponsor, Martin — for once in his life, t all events — sacrificed his own will and pleasure to the ·ishes of another, and consented with a fair grace. So, traveling had done him that much good, already.

Mr. Bevan knocked at the door of a very neat house of ioderate size, from the parlour windows of which lights were iining brightly into the now dark street. It was quickly pened by a man with such a thoroughly Irish face that it eemed as if he ought, as a matter of right and principle, to be i rags, and could have no sort of business to be looking cheerilly at anybody out of a whole suit of clothes.

Commending Mark to the care of this phenomenon — for uch he may be said to have been in Martin's eyes — Mr. levan led the way into the room which had shed its cheerfuless upon the street, to whose occupants he introduced Mr. Chuzzlewit as a gentleman from England, whose acquaintance ie had recently had the pleasure to make. They gave him relcome in all courtesy and politeness; and in less than five ninutes' time he found himself sitting very much at his ease, y the fireside, and becoming vastly well acquainted with the rhole family.

There were two young ladies — one eighteen; the other wenty — both very slender, but very pretty; their mother, rho looked, as Martin thought, much older and more faded han she ought to have looked; and their grandmother, a little harp-eyed, quick old woman, who seemed to have got past hat stage, and to have come all right again. Besides these, here were the young ladies' father, and the young ladies' rother; the first engaged in mercantile affairs; the second, a tudent at college, — both, in a certain cordiality of manner, ike his own friend; and not unlike him in face, which was no great wonder, for it soon appeared that he was their near relation. Martin could not help tracing the family pedigree from the two young ladies, because they were foremost in his thoughts; not only from being, as aforesaid, very pretty, but

of their wearing miraculously small shoes, and
possible silk stockings, the which their rocking-
loped to a distracting extent.

ere is no doubt that it was a monstrous comfortable
tance to be sitting in a snug, well-furnished room, wa
cheerful fire, and full of various pleasant decora
ding four small shoes, and the like amount of silk
ings, and — yes, why not? — the feet and legs therein
shrined. And there is no doubt that Martin was more
well disposed to regard his position in that light, after
recent experience of the Screw, and of Mrs. Pawkins's l
ing house. The consequence was that he made himself
agreeable indeed; and by the time the tea and coffee a
(with sweet preserves, and cunning teacakes in its train)
in a highly genial state, and much esteemed by the
family.

Another delightful circumstance turned up before th
cup of tea was drunk. The whole family had been m
land. There was a pleasant thing! But Martin was not
so glad of this, when he found that they knew all t
dukes, lords, viscounts, marquesses, duchesses, k
baronets, quite affectionately, and were beyond exce
interested in the least particular concerning them. H
when they asked after the wearer of this or that
said "Was he quite well?" Martin answered "Yes,
Never better," and when they said "His lordship
the duchess, was she much changed?" Martin said, "
no, they would know her anywhere, if they saw
row," and so got on pretty well. In like manner, w
young ladies questioned him touching the Gold Fi
Grecian fountain in such and such a nobleman's
and whether there were as many as there used to be, h
reported, after mature consideration, that there must
twice as many, and as to the exotics, "Oh! well! it w
use talking of *them*, they must be seen to be
which improved state of circumstances reminded the fa
the splendour of that brilliant festival comprehende
the British Peerage and Court Calendar to which the
specially invited, and which indeed had been partly g
their honour, and recollections of what Mr. Norris the
had said to the marquess, and of what Mrs. Norris the

had said to the marchioness, and of what the marquess and marchioness had both said, when they said that upon their words and honours they wished Mr. Norris the father and Mrs. Norris the mother, and the Misses Norris the daughters, and Mr. Norris, Junior, the son, would only take up their permanent residence in England, and give them the pleasure of their everlasting friendship, occupied a very considerable time.

Martin thought it rather strange, and in some sort inconsistent, that during the whole of these narrations, and in the very meridian of their enjoyment thereof, both Mr. Norris the father, and Mr. Norris, Junior, the son (who corresponded, every post, with four members of the English Peerage), enlarged upon the inestimable advantage of having no such arbitrary distinctions in that enlightened land, where there were no noblemen but nature's noblemen, and where all society was based on one broad level of brotherly love and natural equality. Indeed Mr. Norris the father, gradually expanding into an oration on this swelling theme, was becoming tedious, when Mr. Bevan diverted his thoughts, by happening to make some casual inquiry relative to the occupier of the next house; in reply to which this same Mr. Norris the father observed that "that person entertained religious opinions of which he could n't approve; and therefore he had n't the honour of knowing the gentleman." Mrs. Norris the mother added another reason of her own, the same in effect, but varying in words; to wit, that she believed the people were well enough in their way, but they were not genteel.

Another little trait came out, which impressed itself on Martin forcibly. Mr. Bevan told them about Mark and the negro, and then it appeared that all the Norrises were abolitionists. It was a great relief to hear this, and Martin was so much encouraged on finding himself in such company that he expressed his sympathy with the oppressed and wretched blacks. Now, one of the young ladies — the prettiest and most delicate one — was mightily amused at the earnestness with which he spoke; and on his craving leave to ask her why, was quite unable for a time to speak for laughing. As soon, however, as she could, she told him that the negroes were such a funny people — so excessively ludicrous in their manners and appearance — that it was wholly impossible for those who

well to associate any serious ideas with such a
na part of the creation. Mr. Norris the father, and
the mother, and Miss Norris the sister, and Mr. No
, the brother, and even Mrs. Norris, Senior, the g
er, were all of this opinion, and laid it down as an
matter of fact — as if there were nothing in suffering
very grim enough to cast a solemn air on any human an
gh it were as ridiculous, physically, as the most grot
pes, or, morally, as the mildest Nimrod among tuft-hu
publicans!

"In short," said Mr. Norris the father, settling the qu
mfortably, "there is a natural antipathy between the ra
"Extending," said Martin's friend, in a low voice, "t
ellest of tortures, and the bargain and sale of unborn g
mons."

Mr. Norris the son said nothing, but he made a wry
and dusted his fingers as Hamlet might after getting
Yorick's skull; just as though he had that moment touch
negro, and some of the black had come off upon his hands

In order that their talk might fall again into its f
pleasant channel, Martin dropped the subject, with a sh
suspicion that it would be a dangerous theme to pursue
the best of circumstances, and again addressed himself t
young ladies, who were very gorgeously attired in very b
ful colours, and had every article of dress on the same e
sive scale as the little shoes and the thin silk stockings
suggested to him that they were great proficients in the F
fashions, which soon turned out to be the case, for th
their information appeared to be none of the newest, a
very extensive, and the eldest sister in particular, wa
distinguished by a talent for metaphysics, the laws of hu
pressure, and the rights of human kind, had a novel wa
combining these acquirements and bringing them to bea
any subject from Millinery to the Millennium, both inclu
which was at once improving and remarkable, — so much
in short, that it was usually observed to reduce foreigners
state of temporary insanity in five minutes.

Martin felt his reason going, and as a means of saving
self, besought the eldest sister covering a piano in the ne
sing. With this request she willingly complied, and a ha
concert, solely sustained by the Misses Norris, presently be

They sang in all languages — except their own; — German, French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Swiss; but nothing native; nothing so low as native. For, in this respect, languages are like many other travellers — ordinary and commonplace enough at home, but specially genteel abroad.

There is little doubt that in course of time the Misses Norris would have come to Hebrew, if they had not been interrupted by an announcement from the Irishman, who, flinging open the door, cried in a loud voice: —

"Jiniral Fladdock!"

"My!" cried the sisters, desisting suddenly. "The general come back!"

As they made the exclamation, the general, attired in full uniform for a ball, came darting in with such precipitancy that, hitching his boot in the carpet, and getting his sword between his legs, he came down headlong, and presented a curious little bald place on the crown of his head to the eyes of the astonished company. Nor was this the worst of it; for being rather corpulent and very tight, the general, being down, could not get up again, but lay there, writhing and doing such things with his boots, as there is no other instance of in military history.

Of course there was an immediate rush to his assistance; and the general was promptly raised. But his uniform was so fearfully and wonderfully made that he came up stiff and without a bend in him, like a dead Clown, and had no command whatever of himself until he was put quite flat upon the soles of his feet, when he became animated as by a miracle, and moving edgewise, that he might go in a narrower compass and be in less danger of fraying the gold lace on his epaulettes by brushing them against anything, advanced with a smiling visage to salute the lady of the house.

To be sure, it would have been impossible for the family to testify purer delight and joy than at this unlooked-for appearance of General Fladdock! The general was as warmly received as if New York had been in a state of siege and no other general was to be got, for love or money. He shook hands with the Norrises three times all round, and then reviewed them from a little distance as a brave commander might, with his ample cloak drawn forward over the right shoulder and thrown back upon the left side to reveal his manly breast.

u do I, then," cried the general, "once again behold
n spirits of my country!"

'es," said Mr. Norris the father. "Here we are,

Then all the Norrises pressed round the general, inqui
w and where he had been since the date of his last le
d how he had enjoyed himself in foreign parts, and, par
ly and above all, to what extent he had become acqua
ith the great dukes, lords, viscounts, marquesses, duche
ights, and baronets, in whom the people of those bein
ountries had delight.

"Well, then, don't ask me," said the general, holding u
nd. "I was among 'em all the time, and have got p
ournals in my trunk with my name printed" — he lowere
voice and was very impressive here — "among the fashio
news. But, oh, the conventionalities of that a-maring
rope!"

"Ah!" cried Mr. Norris the father, giving his head a
ancholy shake, and looking towards Martin as though he w
say, "I can't deny it, sir. I would if I could."

"The limited diffusion of a moral sense in that [illegible]
exclaimed the general. "The absence of a moral [illegible]
man!"

"Ah!" sighed all the Norrises, quite overwhelmed
despondency.

"I couldn't have realised it," pursued the general, [illegible]
out being located on the spot. Norris, your imagination [illegible]
imagination of a strong man, but *you* couldn't have [illegible]
it, without being located on the spot!"

"Never," said Mr. Norris.

"The exclusiveness, the pride, the form, the [illegible]
exclaimed the general, emphasising the article more [illegible]
at every repetition. "The artificial barriers set up [illegible]
man and man, the division of the human race into [illegible]
and plain cards, of every denomination, — into clubs, [illegible]
spades, — anything but hearts!"

"Ah!" cried the whole family. "Too true, general!"

"But stay!" cried Mr. Norris the father, taking him by
arm. "Surely you crossed in the Screw, general!"

"Well! so I did," was the reply.

"Possible!" cried the young ladies. "Only think!"

The general seemed at a loss to understand why his having come home in the Screw should occasion such a sensation, nor did he seem at all clearer on the subject when Mr. Norris, introducing him to Martin, said: —

"A fellow-passenger of yours, I think?"

"Of mine!" exclaimed the general; "no!"

He had never seen Martin, but Martin had seen him, and recognised him, now that they stood face to face, as the gentleman who had stuck his hands in his pockets towards the end of the voyage, and walked the deck with his nostrils dilated.

Everybody looked at Martin. There was no help for it. The truth must out.

"I came over in the same ship as the general," said Martin, "but not in the same cabin. It being necessary for me to observe strict economy, I took my passage in the steerage."

If the general had been carried up bodily to a loaded cannon, and required to let it off that moment, he could not have been in a state of greater consternation than when he heard these words. He, Fladdock, — Fladdock in full militia uniform, Fladdock the General, Fladdock the caressed of foreign noblemen, — expected to know a fellow who had come over in the steerage of a line-of-packet ship, at the cost of four pound ten! and meeting that fellow in the very sanctuary of New York fashion, and nestling in the bosom of the New York aristocracy! He almost laid his hand upon his sword.

A death-like stillness fell upon the Norrises. If this story should get wind, their country relation had, by his imprudence, for ever disgraced them. They were the bright particular stars of an exalted New York sphere. There were other fashionable spheres above them, and other fashionable spheres below, and none of the stars in any one of these spheres had anything to say to the stars in any other of these spheres. But through all the spheres it would go forth that the Norrises, deceived by gentlemanly manners and appearances, had, falling from their high estate, "received" a dollarless and unknown man. Oh, guardian eagle of the pure Republic, had they lived for this!

"You will allow me," said Martin, after a terrible silence, "to take my leave. I feel that I am the cause of at least as much embarrassment here as I have brought upon myself. But I am bound, before I go, to exonerate this gentleman, who,

...ntr ...cing me to such society, was quite ignorant of t...
...rtunness, I assure you."

...ith that he made his low to the Norrises, and walked ...
... a man of snow; very cool externally, but pretty h...
...hin.

"Come, come," said Mr. Norris the father, looking wit...
...e face on the assembled circle as Martin closed the do...
...he young man has this night beheld a refinement of so...
...ner, and an easy magnificence of social decoration, to wh...
... is a stranger in his own country. Let us hope it m...
...wake a moral sense within him."

If that peculiarly transatlantic article, a moral sense, — ...if native statesmen, orators, and pamphleteers, are to be ...lieved, America quite monopolises the commodity, — if t...peculiarly transatlantic article be supposed to include a benev...lent love of all mankind, certainly Martin's would have ha... just then, a deal of waking. As he strode along the str... with Mark at his heels, his immoral sense was in active op... tion, prompting him to the utterance of some rather sarca... remarks, which it was well for his own credit that n... overheard. He had so far cooled down, however, that he ... begun to laugh at the recollection of these incidents, when ... heard another step behind him, and turning round encounte... his friend Bevan, quite out of breath.

He drew his arm through Martin's, and, entreating him ... walk slowly, was silent for some minutes. At length ... said: —

"I hope you exonerate me in another sense!"

"How do you mean?" asked Martin.

"I hope you acquit me of intending or foreseeing the ... nation of our visit. But I scarcely need ask you that."

"Scarcely, indeed," said Martin. "I am the more bou... to you for your kindness, when I find what kind of stuff ... good citizens here are made of."

"I reckon," his friend returned, "that they are made ... pretty much the same stuff as other folks, if they would ... own it, and not set up on false pretences."

"In good faith, that's true," said Martin.

"I dare say," resumed his friend, "you might have wit... scene as that in an English comedy, and not detect any ... improbability or anomaly in the matter of it!"

"Yes, indeed!"

"Doubtless it is more ridiculous here than anywhere else," said his companion; "but our professions are to blame for that. So far as I myself am concerned, I may add that I was perfectly aware from the first that you came over in the steerage, for I had seen the list of passengers, and knew it did not comprise your name."

"I feel more obliged to you than before," said Martin.

"Norris is a very good fellow in his way," observed Mr. Bevan.

"Is he?" said Martin drily.

"Oh, yes! there are a hundred good points about him. If you or anybody else addressed him as another order of being, and sued to him *in formâ pauperis*, he would be all kindness and consideration."

"I need n't have travelled three thousand miles from home to find such a character as *that*," said Martin. Neither he nor his friend said anything more on the way back; each appearing to find sufficient occupation in his own thoughts.

The tea, or the supper, or whatever else they call the evening meal, was over when they reached the major's; but the cloth, ornamented with a few additional smears and stains, was still upon the table. At one end of the board Mrs. Jefferson Brick and two other ladies were drinking tea — out of the ordinary course, evidently, for they were bonneted and shawled, and seemed to have just come home. By the light of three flaring candles of different lengths, in as many candlesticks of different patterns, the room showed to almost as little advantage as in broad day.

These ladies were all three talking together in a very loud tone when Martin and his friend entered; but, seeing those gentlemen, they stopped directly, and became excessively genteel, not to say frosty. As they went on to exchange some few remarks in whispers, the very water in the tea-pot might have fallen twenty degrees in temperature beneath their chilling coldness.

"Have you been to meeting, Mrs. Brick?" asked Martin's friend, with something of a roguish twinkle in his eye.

"To lecture, sir."

"I beg your pardon. I forgot. You don't go to meeting, I think?"

re[illegible] lady on the right of Mrs. Brick gave a pi[illegible], as much as to say "*I* do!" — as, indeed, she did, [illegible] night in the week.

"[illegible] good discourse, ma'am!" asked Mr. Bevan, addressi[illegible]dy.

[illegible] lady raised her eyes in a pious manner, and answe[illegible]." She had been much comforted by some good, stro[illegible]ry doctrine, which satisfactorily disposed of all her frie[illegible]equaintances, and quite settled *their* business. Her b[illegible], too, had far outshone every bonnet in the congregation; [illegible]was tranquil on all accounts.

"What course of lectures are you attending now, ma'am[illegible]id Martin's friend, turning again to Mrs. Brick.

"The Philosophy of the Soul — on Wednesdays."

"On Mondays?"

**"The Philosophy of Crime."**

**"On Fridays?"**

**"The Philosophy of Vegetables."**

"You have forgotten Thursdays — the Philosophy of Gover[illegible]ment, my dear," observed the third lady.

"No," said Mrs. Brick. "That 's Tuesdays."

"So it is!" cried the lady. "The Philosophy of Matter Thursdays, of course."

"You see, Mr. Chuzzlewit, our ladies are fully em[illegible]," said Bevan.

"Indeed you have reason to say so," answered Mart[illegible]. "Between these very grave pursuits abroad, and family [illegible]at home, their time must be pretty well engrossed."

Martin stopped here, for he saw that the ladies regarded [illegible]with no very great favour, though what he had done to [illegible]the disdainful expression which appeared in their faces he [illegible]at a loss to divine. But on their going up stairs to their [illegible]rooms — which they very soon did — Mr. Bevan informed [illegible]that domestic drudgery was far beneath the exalted range [illegible]these Philosophers, and that the chances were a hundred to [illegible]that neither of the three could perform the easiest woman[illegible]work for herself, or make the simplest article of dress for [illegible]of her children.

"Though whether they might not be better employed w[illegible]even such blunt instruments as knitting-needles, than w[illegible]these edge-tools," he said, "is another question, but I can s[illegible]

swer for one thing — they don't often cut themselves. Devotions and lectures are our balls and concerts. They go to these places of resort, as an escape from monotony; look at each other's clothes; and come home again."

"When you say 'home,' do you mean a house like this?"

"Very often. But I see you are tired to death, and will wish you good night. We will discuss your projects in the morning. You cannot but feel already that it is useless staying here, with any hope of advancing them. You will have to go farther."

"And to fare worse?" said Martin, pursuing the old adage.

"Well, I hope not. But sufficient for the day, you know — Good night."

They shook hands heartily, and separated. As soon as Martin was left alone, the excitement of novelty and change which had sustained him through all the fatigues of the day, departed; and he felt so thoroughly dejected and worn out that he even lacked the energy to crawl up stairs to bed.

In twelve or fifteen hours how great a change had fallen on his hopes and sanguine plans! New and strange as he was to the ground on which he stood, and to the air he breathed, he could not — recalling all that he had crowded into that one day — but entertain a strong misgiving that his enterprise was doomed. Rash and ill-considered as it had often looked on shipboard, but had never seemed on shore, it wore a dismal aspect, now, that frightened him. Whatever thoughts he called up to his aid, they came upon him in depressing and discouraging shapes, and gave him no relief. Even the diamonds on his finger sparkled with the brightness of tears, and had no ray of hope in all their brilliant lustre.

He continued to sit in gloomy rumination by the stove — unmindful of the boarders who dropped in one by one from their stores and counting-houses, or the neighbouring bar-rooms, and after taking long pulls from a great white water-jug upon the sideboard, and lingering with a kind of hideous fascination near the brass spittoons, lounged heavily to bed — until at length Mark Tapley came and shook him by the arm, supposing him asleep.

"Mark!" he cried, starting.

"All right, sir," said that cheerful follower, snuffing with his fingers the candle he bore. "It ain't a very large bed,

, sir; and a man as wasn't thirsty might drink, a
akfast, all the water you 've got to wash in, and arterw
the towel. But you 'll sleep without rocking to-night,
"I feel as if the house were on the sea," said Martin,
ring when he rose; "and am utterly wretched."

"I 'm as jolly as a sandboy, myself, sir," said Mark. "I
Lord, I have reason to be! I ought to have been born b
that 's my opinion. Take care how you go" — for they
w ascending the stairs. "You recollect the gentleman ab
Screw as had the very small trunk, sir?"

"The valise? Yes."

"Well, sir, there 's been a delivery of clean clothes from
wash to-night, and they 're put outside the bedroom doors
If you take notice as we go up, what a very few shirts t
are, and what a many fronts, you 'll penetrate the myster
his packing."

But Martin was too weary and despondent to take hee
anything, so had no interest in this discovery. Mr. Tap
nothing dashed by his indifference, conducted him to the
the house, and into the bed-chamber prepared for his
which was a very little narrow room, with half a
a bedstead like a chest without a lid, two chairs
pet, such as shoes are commonly tried upon at
establishment in England, a little looking-glass
the wall; and a washing-table, with a jug and ewer, that
have been mistaken for a milk-pot and slop basin.

"I suppose they polish themselves with a dry cloth
country," said Mark. "They 've certainly got a
'phoby, sir."

"I wish you would pull off my boots for me," said Mar
dropping into one of the chairs. "I am quite
dead beat, Mark."

"You won't say that to-morrow morning, sir," returned
Tapley, "nor even to-night, sir, when you 've made a
this." With which he produced a very large tumbler,
to the brim with little blocks of clear transparent ice,
which one or two thin slices of lemon, and a golden
delicious appearance, appealed from the still depths
the loving eye of the spectator.

"What do you call this?" said Martin.

But Mr. Tapley made no answer, merely plunging a

into the mixture — which caused a pleasant commotion among the pieces of ice — and signifying by an expressive gesture that it was to be pumped up through that agency by the enraptured drinker.

Martin took the glass, with an astonished look; applied his lips to the reed; and cast up his eyes once in ecstasy. He paused no more until the goblet was drained to the last drop.

"There, sir!" said Mark, taking it from him with a triumphant face. "If ever you should happen to be dead beat again, when I ain't in the way, all you 've got to do is to ask the nearest man to go and fetch a cobbler."

"To go and fetch a cobbler?" repeated Martin.

"This wonderful invention, sir," said Mark, tenderly patting the empty glass, "is called a cobbler. Sherry cobbler when you name it long; cobbler, when you name it short. Now you 're equal to having your boots took off, and are, in every particular worth mentioning, another man."

Having delivered himself of this solemn preface, he brought the bootjack.

"Mind! I am not going to relapse, Mark," said Martin; "but, good Heaven, if we should be left in some wild part of this country without goods or money!"

"Well, sir!" replied the imperturbable Tapley, "from what we 've seen already I don't know whether, under those circumstances, we should n't do better in the wild parts than in the tame ones."

"Oh, Tom Pinch, Tom Pinch!" said Martin, in a thoughtful tone; "what would I give to be again beside you, and able to hear your voice, though it were even in the old bedroom at Pecksniff's!"

"Oh, Dragon, Dragon!" echoed Mark cheerfully, "if there warn't any water between you and me, and nothing faint-hearted-like in going back, I don't know that I might n't say the same. But here am I, Dragon, in New York, America; and there are you in Wiltshire, Europe; and there 's a fortune to make, Dragon, and a beautiful young lady to make it for; and whenever you go to see the Monument, Dragon, you must n't give in on the doorsteps, or you 'll never get up to the top!"

"Wisely said, Mark," cried Martin. "We must look forward."

all the story-books as ever I read, sir, the peop
as backward was turned into stones," replied Mark;
opinion always was, that they brought it on themse
it served 'em right. I wish you good night, sir,
ant dreams!"

They must be of home, then," said Martin, as he lay d
bed.

"So I say, too," whispered Mark Tapley, when he wa
hearing and in his own room; "for if there don't co
e afore we're well out of this, when there 'll be a l
ore credit in keeping up one's jollity, I 'm a United St
an!"

Leaving them to blend and mingle in their sleep the shad
of objects afar off, as they take fantastic shapes upon the
in the dim light of thought without control, be it the pur
this slight chronicle — a dream within a dream — as rapidly
change the scene, and cross the ocean to the English shore.

## CHAPTER XVIII

DOES BUSINESS WITH THE HOUSE OF ANTHONY CHUZZLEWIT AND SON, FROM WHICH ONE OF THE PARTNERS RETIRES UNEXPECTEDLY.

CHANGE begets change. Nothing propagates so fast. If a man habituated to a narrow circle of cares and pleasures, out of which he seldom travels, step beyond it, though for never so brief a space, his departure from the monotonous scene on which he has been an actor of importance would seem to be the signal for instant confusion. As if, in the gap he had left, the wedge of change were driven to the head, rending what was a solid mass to fragments, things cemented and held together by the usages of years burst asunder in as many weeks. The mine which Time has slowly dug beneath familiar objects is sprung in an instant, and what was rock before becomes but sand and dust.

Most men, at one time or other, have proved this in some degree. The extent to which the natural laws of change asserted their supremacy in that limited sphere of action which Martin had deserted, shall be faithfully set down in these pages.

"What a cold spring it is!" whimpered old Anthony, drawing near the evening fire. "It was a warmer season, sure, when I was young!"

"You need n't go scorching your clothes into holes, whether it was or not," observed the amiable Jonas, raising his eyes from yesterday's newspaper. "Broadcloth ain't so cheap as that comes to."

"A good lad!" cried the father, breathing on his cold hands, and feebly chafing them against each other. "A prudent lad! He never delivered himself up to the vanities of dress. No, no!"

"I don't know but I would though, mind you, if I could do it for nothing," said his son, as he resumed the paper.

Ah!" chuckled the old man. "*If*, indeed. — But i
y cold."

"Let the fire be!" cried Mr. Jonas, stopping his honour
ent's hand in the use of the poker. "Do you mean
me to want in your old age, that you take to wasting now?"

"There's not time for that, Jonas," said the old man.

"Not time for what?" bawled his heir.

"For me to come to want. I wish there was!"

"You always were as selfish an old blade as need be," sa
nas, in a voice too low for him to hear, and looking at hi
th an angry frown. "You act up to your character. Y
uld n't mind coming to want, would n't you! I dare s
n would n't. And your own flesh and blood might come
want too, might they, for anything you cared? Oh, you pr
cious old flint!"

After this dutiful address, he took his tea-cup in his ha
— for that meal was in progress, and the father and son o
Chuffey were partakers of it. Then, looking steadfastly at h
father, and stopping now and then to carry a spoonful of tea t
his lips, he proceeded in the same tone, thus —

"Want, indeed! You're a nice old man to be talking
want at this time of day. Beginning to talk of want, are y
Well, I declare! There is n't time! No, I should [illegible]
But you'd live to be a couple of hundred if you [illegible]
after all be discontented. *I* know you!"

The old man sighed, and still sat cowering before the fi
Mr. Jonas shook his Britannia-metal teaspoon at him, an
taking a loftier position went on to argue the point on hig
moral grounds.

"If you're in such a state of mind as that," he grum
but in the same subdued key, "why don't you make
your property? Buy an annuity cheap, and make your
interesting to yourself and everybody else that watches th
speculation. But no, that would n't suit you. That w
be natural conduct to your own son, and you like to be unna
ural, and to keep him out of his rights. Why, I should
ashamed of myself if I was you, and glad to hide my head
the what you may call it."

Possibly this general phrase supplied the place of grave,
tomb, or sepulchre, or cemetery, or mausoleum, or other
word which the filial tenderness of Mr Jonas made him

cate of pronouncing. He pursued the theme no further; for Chuffey, somehow discovering, from his old corner by the fireside, that Anthony was in the attitude of a listener, and that Jonas appeared to be speaking, suddenly cried out, like one inspired: —

"He is your own son, Mr. Chuzzlewit. Your own son, sir!"

Old Chuffey little suspected what depth of application these words had, or that, in the bitter satire which they bore, they might have sunk into the old man's very soul, could he have known what words were hanging on his own son's lips, or what was passing in his thoughts. But the voice diverted the current of Anthony's reflections, and roused him.

"Yes, yes, Chuffey, Jonas is a chip of the old block. It 's a very old block now, Chuffey," said the old man, with a strange look of discomposure.

"Precious old," assented Jonas.

"No, no, no," said Chuffey. "No, Mr. Chuzzlewit. Not old at all, sir."

"Oh! He 's worse than ever, you know!" cried Jonas, quite disgusted. "Upon my soul, father, he 's getting too bad. Hold your tongue, will you?"

"He says you 're wrong!" cried Anthony to the old clerk.

"Tut, tut!" was Chuffey's answer. "I know better. I say *he* 's wrong. I say *he* 's wrong. He 's a boy. That 's what he is. So are you, Mr. Chuzzlewit — a kind of boy. Ha, ha, ha! You 're quite a boy to many I have known — you 're a boy to me; you 're a boy to hundreds of us. Don't mind him."

With which extraordinary speech — for in the case of Chuffey this was a burst of eloquence without a parallel — the poor old shadow drew through his palsied arm his master's hand, and held it there, with his own folded upon it, as if he would defend him.

"I grow deafer every day, Chuff," said Anthony, with as much softness of manner, or, to describe it more correctly, with as little hardness as he was capable of expressing.

"No, no," cried Chuffey. "No, you don't. What if you did? I 've been deaf this twenty year."

"I grow blinder, too," said the old man, shaking his head.

"That 's a good sign!" cried Chuffey. "Ha, ha! The best sign in the world! You saw too well before."

He patted Anthony upon the hand as one might comfort a child, and drawing the old man's arm still further through his own, shook his trembling fingers towards the spot where Jonas sat, as though he would wave him off. But Anthony remaining quite still and silent, he relaxed his hold by slow degrees and lapsed into his usual niche in the corner; merely putting forth his hand at intervals and touching his old employer gently on the coat, as with the design of assuring himself that he was yet beside him.

Mr. Jonas was so very much amazed by these proceedings that he could do nothing but stare at the two old men, until Chuffey had fallen into his usual state, and Anthony had sunk into a doze, when he gave some vent to his emotions by going close up to the former personage, and making as though he would, in vulgar parlance, "punch his head."

"They've been carrying on this game," thought Jonas in a brown study, "for the last two or three weeks. I never saw my father take so much notice of him as he has in that time. What! You're legacy hunting are you, Mister Chuff? Eh!"

But Chuffey was as little conscious of the thought as of the bodily advance of Mr. Jonas's clenched fist, which hovered fondly about his ear. When he had scowled at him to his heart's content, Jonas took the candle from the table, and walking into the glass office, produced a bunch of keys from his pocket. With one of these he opened a secret drawer in the desk — peeping stealthily out, as he did so, to be certain that the two old men were still before the fire.

"All as right as ever," said Jonas, propping the lid of the desk open with his forehead, and unfolding a paper. "Here's the will, Mister Chuff. Thirty pound a year for your maintenance, old boy, and all the rest to his only son, Jonas. You needn't trouble yourself to be too affectionate. You won't get anything by it. What's that?"

It was startling, certainly. A face on the other side of the glass partition looking curiously in, and not at him but at the paper in his hand. For the eyes were attentively cast down upon the writing, and were swiftly raised when he cried out. Then they met his own, and were as the eyes of Mr. Pecksniff.

Suffering the lid of the desk to fall with a loud noise, but not forgetting even then to lock it, Jonas, pale and breathess, gazed upon this phantom. It moved, opened the door, and walked in.

"What 's the matter?" cried Jonas, falling back. "Who is it? Where do you come from? What do you want?"

"Matter!" cried the voice of Mr. Pecksniff, as Pecksniff in the flesh smiled amiably upon him. "The matter, Mr. Jonas!"

"What are you prying and peering about here for?" said Jonas angrily. "What do you mean by coming up to town in this way, and taking one unawares? It 's precious odd a man can't read the — the newspaper — in his own office without being startled out of his wits by people coming in without notice. Why did n't you knock at the door?"

"So I did, Mr. Jonas," answered Pecksniff, "but no one heard me. I was curious," he added in his gentle way as he laid his hand upon the young man's shoulder, "to find out what part of the newspaper interested you so much; but the glass was too dim and dirty."

Jonas glanced in haste at the partition. Well. It was n't very clean. So far he spoke the truth.

"Was it poetry, now?" said Mr. Pecksniff, shaking the forefinger of his right hand with an air of cheerful banter. "Or was it politics? Or was it the price of stocks? The main chance, Mr. Jonas, the main chance, I suspect."

"You ain't far from the truth," answered Jonas, recovering himself and snuffing the candle: "but how the deuce do you come to be in London again? Ecod! it 's enough to make a man stare to see a fellow looking at him all of a sudden who he thought was sixty or seventy mile away."

"So it is," said Mr. Pecksniff. "No doubt of it, my dear Mr. Jonas. For while the human mind is constituted as it is —"

"Oh, bother the human mind," interrupted Jonas with impatience, "what have you come up for?"

"A little matter of business," said Mr. Pecksniff, "which has arisen quite unexpectedly."

"Oh!" cried Jonas, "is that all? Well. Here 's father in the next room. Hallo, father, here 's Pecksniff! He gets more addle-pated every day he lives, I do believe," muttered Jonas, shaking his honoured parent roundly. "Don't I tell you Pecksniff 's here, stupid-head?"

The combined effects of the shaking and this loving remonstrance soon awoke the old man, who gave Mr. Pecksniff a

ling welcome, which was attributable in part to his b
o see that gentleman, and in part to his unfading dil
the recollection of having called him a hypocrite. As
ecksniff had not yet taken tea (indeed he had, but an h
before, arrived in London) the remains of the late collat
with a rasher of bacon, were served up for his entertainm
nd as Mr. Jonas had a business appointment in the c
-treet, he stepped out to keep it; promising to return be
fr. Pecksniff could finish his repast.

"And now my good sir," said Mr. Pecksniff to Anth
"now that we are alone, pray tell me what I can do for y
I say alone, because I believe that our dear friend Mr. Chu
is, metaphysically speaking, a — shall I say a dummy?" sa
Mr. Pecksniff with his sweetest smile, and his head very m
on one side.

"He neither hears us," replied Anthony, "nor sees us."

"Why then," said Mr. Pecksniff, "I will be bold to s
with the utmost sympathy for his afflictions, and the good
admiration of those excellent qualities which do equal ho
to his head and to his heart, that he is what is gentl
termed a dummy. You were going to observe, my d
sir — "

"I was not going to make any observation that I kn w
replied the old man.

"*I* was," said Mr. Pecksniff mildly.

"Oh! *you* were! What was it?"

"That I never," said Mr. Pecksniff, previously rising to
that the door was shut, and arranging his chair when he re
back so that it could not be opened in the least without
immediately becoming aware of the circumstance, "that I ne
in my life was so astonished as by the receipt of your le
yesterday. That you should do me the honour to wish to
counsel with me on any matter amazed me. But that y
should desire to do so, to the exclusion even of Mr J n
showed an amount of confidence in one to whom you had
a verbal injury — merely a verbal injury you were anxio
repair — which gratified, which moved, which overcame me."

He was always a glib speaker, but he delivered this
address very glibly, having been at some pains to rehearse
outside the coach.

Although he paused for a reply, and truly said that he w

there at Anthony's request, the old man sat gazing at him in profound silence and with a perfectly blank face. Nor did he seem to have the least desire or impulse to pursue the conversation, though Mr. Pecksniff looked towards the door, and pulled out his watch, and gave him many other hints that their time was short, and Jonas, if he kept his word, would soon return. But the strangest incident in all this strange behaviour was, that of a sudden — in a moment — so swiftly that it was impossible to trace how, or to observe any process of change — his features fell into their old expression, and he cried, striking his hand passionately upon the table as if no interval at all had taken place: —

"Will you hold your tongue, sir, and let me speak?"

Mr. Pecksniff deferred to him with a submissive bow; and said within himself, "I knew his hand was changed, and that his writing staggered. I said so yesterday. Ahem! Dear me!"

"Jonas is sweet upon your daughter, Pecksniff," said the old man, in his usual tone.

"We spoke of that, if you remember, sir, at Mrs. Todgers's," replied the courteous architect.

"You need n't speak so loud," retorted Anthony. "I 'm not so deaf as that."

Mr. Pecksniff had certainly raised his voice pretty high, not so much because he thought Anthony was deaf, as because he felt convinced that his perceptive faculties were waxing dim; but this quick resentment of his considerate behaviour greatly disconcerted him, and, not knowing what tack to shape his course upon, he made another inclination of the head, yet more submissive than the last.

"I have said," repeated the old man, "that Jonas is sweet upon your daughter."

"A charming girl, sir," murmured Mr. Pecksniff, seeing that he waited for an answer. "A dear girl, Mr. Chuzzlewit, though I say it who should not."

"You know better," cried the old man, advancing his wrinkled face at least a yard, and starting forward in his chair to do it. "You lie! What, you *will* be a hypocrite, will you?"

"My good sir," Mr. Pecksniff began.

"Don't call me a good sir," retorted Anthony, "and don't

to be one yourself. If your daughter was w
have me believe, she would n't do for Jonas.
what she is, I think she will. He might be dem
wife. She might run riot, contract debts, and waste
stance. Now when I am dead —"

His face altered so horribly as he said the word,
Pecksniff really was fain to look another way.

"— It will be worse for me to know of such doings,
I was alive; for to be tormented for getting that togeth
even while I suffer for its acquisition is flung into the v
nels of the streets, would be insupportable torture. N
the old man hoarsely, "let that be saved at least; let
something gained, and kept fast hold of, when so much

"My dear Mr. Chuzzlewit," said Mr. Pecksniff, "t
unwholesome fancies; quite unnecessary, sir, quite
for, I am sure. The truth is, my dear sir, that you
well!"

"Not dying though!" cried Anthony, with someth
the snarl of a wild animal. "Not yet! There are
life in me. Why, look at him," pointing to his fe
"Death has no right to leave him standing, and t
down!"

Mr. Pecksniff was so much afraid of the old man,
completely taken aback by the state in which he f
that he had not even presence of mind enough t
scrap of morality from the great storehouse within
breast. Therefore he stammered out that no doubt
fairness and decency, Mr. Chuffey's turn to expire
from all he had heard of Mr. Chuffey, and the little
the pleasure of knowing of that gentleman personally,
convinced in his own mind that he would see the ju
expiring with as little delay as possible.

"Come here!" said the old man, beckoning him
nearer. "Jonas will be my heir, Jonas will be a
great catch for you. You know that. Jonas is swe
your daughter."

"I know that too," thought Mr. Pecksniff, "for y
said it often enough."

"He might get more money than with her," said
man, "but she will help him to take care of what th
She is not too young or heedless, and comes of a g

ping stock. But don't you play too fine a game. She only holds him by a thread; and if you draw it too tight (I know his temper) it 'll snap. Bind him when he 's in the mood, Pecksniff; bind him. You 're too deep. In your way of leading him on, you 'll leave him miles behind. Bah, you man of oil, have I no eyes to see how you have angled with him from the first?"

"Now I wonder," thought Mr. Pecksniff, looking at him with a wistful face, "whether this is all he has to say!"

Old Anthony rubbed his hands and muttered to himself; complained again that he was cold; drew his chair before the fire; and, sitting with his back to Mr. Pecksniff, and his chin sunk down upon his breast, was, in another minute, quite regardless or forgetful of his presence.

Uncouth and unsatisfactory as this short interview had been, it had furnished Mr. Pecksniff with a hint which, supposing nothing further were imparted to him, repaid the journey up and home again. For the good gentleman had never (for want of an opportunity) dived into the depths of Mr. Jonas's nature; and any recipe for catching such a son-in-law (much more one written on a leaf out of his own father's book) was worth the having. In order that he might lose no chance of improving so fair an opportunity by allowing Anthony to fall asleep before he had finished all he had to say, Mr. Pecksniff, in the disposal of the refreshments on the table — a work to which he now applied himself in earnest — resorted to many ingenious contrivances for attracting his attention, such as coughing, sneezing, clattering the teacups, sharpening the knives, dropping the loaf, and so forth. But all in vain, for Mr. Jonas returned, and Anthony had said no more.

"What! my father asleep again?" he cried, as he hung up his hat, and cast a look at him. "Ah! and snoring. Only hear!"

"He snores very deep," said Mr. Pecksniff.

"Snores deep?" repeated Jonas. "Yes; let him alone for that. He 'll snore for six, at any time."

"Do you know, Mr. Jonas," said Pecksniff, "that I think your father is — don't let me alarm you — breaking?"

"Oh, is he though?" replied Jonas, with a shake of the head which expressed the closeness of his dutiful observation. "Ecod, you don't know how tough he is. He ain't upon the move yet."

uck me that he was changed, both in his appe
mer," said Mr. Pecksniff.
t 's all you know about it," returned Jonas, s
sur with a melancholy air. "He never was bette
s now. How are they all at home? How 's Charity
Blooming, Mr. Jonas, blooming."
"And the other one — how 's she?"
"Volatile trifler!" said Mr. Pecksniff, fondly s
"She is well — she is well. Roving from parlour to ba
Mr. Jonas, like the bee; skimming from pest to pills
the butterfly; dipping her young beak into our currant
like the humming-bird! Ah! were she a little less giddy
she is; and had she but the sterling qualities of Cher
young friend!"
"Is she so very giddy, then?" asked Jonas.
"Well, well!" said Mr. Pecksniff, with great feeling
me not be hard upon my child. Beside her sister Che
**appears so. A strange noise that, Mr. Jonas!"**
"Something wrong in the clock, I suppose," said
glancing towards it. "So the other one ain't your fav
ain't she?"

The fond father was about to reply, and had alread
moned into his face a look of most intense seriousness
the sound he had already noticed was repeated.

"Upon my word, Mr. Jonas, that is a very extraor
clock," said Pecksniff.

It would have been, if it had made the noise which
them; but another kind of time-piece was fast running
and from that the sound proceeded. A scream, for
rendered a hundred times more loud and fearful by
silent habits, made the house ring from roof to cellar
looking round, they saw Anthony Chuzzlewit extended
floor, with the old clerk upon his knees beside him.

He had fallen from his chair in a fit, and lay there, s
for each gasp of breath, with every shrivelled vein and
starting in its place, as if it were bent on bursting with
his age, and sternly pleading with Nature against her ve
It was frightful to see how the principle of life, shut up
his withered frame, fought like a strong devil, must
released, and rent its ancient prison-house. A young
the fulness of his vigour, struggling with so much stre

arried up and down the street; windows and doors opened; thieves and beggars took their usual posts; watchmen bestirred themselves; tradesmen set forth their shops; lamps and constables were on the watch; all kinds of human creatures strove in their several ways as hard to live as the one old man, who combated for every grain of sand in his fast-emptying glass as eagerly as if it were an empire.

"If anything happens, Pecksniff," said Jonas, "you promise me to stop here till it 's all over. You shall see I do what 's right."

"I know that you will do what 's right, Mr. Jonas," said Pecksniff.

"Yes, yes, but I won't be doubted. No one shall have in his power to say a syllable against me," he returned. "I know how people will talk. — Just as if he wasn't old, and had the secret of keeping him alive!"

Mr. Pecksniff promised that he would remain, if circumstances should render it, in his esteemed friend's opinion desirable; they were finishing their meal in silence, when suddenly an apparition stood before them, so ghastly to see that Jonas shrieked aloud, and both recoiled in horror.

Old Anthony, dressed in his usual clothes, was in the room — beside the table. He leaned upon the shoulder of his solitary friend, and on his livid face, and on his heavy hands, in his glassy eyes, and traced by an eternal finger in the cold drops of sweat upon his brow, was one word — Death.

He spoke to them — in something of his own voice, but sharpened and made hollow, like a dead man's face. What he would have said, God knows. He seemed to utter words, but they were such as man had never heard. And this was the most fearful circumstance of all, to see him standing there gabbling in an unearthly tongue.

"He 's better now," said Chuffey. "Better now. Let him sit in his old chair, and he 'll be well again. I told him to mind. I said so, yesterday."

They put him in his easy-chair, and wheeled it near the window; then, setting open the door, exposed him to the current of morning air. But not all the air that is, nor all the winds that ever blow 'twixt Heaven and Earth, would bring new life to him.

Fling him to the throat in golden pieces now, and his heavy fingers shall not close on one!

## CHAPTER XIX

THE READER IS BROUGHT INTO COMMUNICATION WITH SOME PROFESSIONAL PERSONS, AND SHEDS A TEAR OVER THE FILIAL PIETY OF GOOD MR. JONAS.

Mr. Pecksniff was in a hackney cabriolet, for Jonas Chuzzlewit had said "Spare no expense." Mankind is evil in its thoughts and in its base constructions, and Jonas was resolved it should not have an inch to stretch into an ell against him. It never should be charged upon his father's son that he had grudged the money for his father's funeral. Hence, until the obsequies should be concluded, Jonas had taken for his motto "Spend, and spare not!"

Mr. Pecksniff had been to the undertaker, and was now upon his way to another officer in the train of mourning — a female functionary, a nurse, and watcher, and performer of nameless offices about the persons of the dead — whom he had recommended. Her name, as Mr. Pecksniff gathered from a scrap of writing in his hand, was Gamp; her residence in Kingsgate Street, High Holborn. So Mr. Pecksniff, in a hackney cab, was rattling over Holborn stones, in quest of Mrs. Gamp.

This lady lodged at a bird-fancier's, next door but one to the celebrated mutton-pie shop, and directly opposite to the original cat's-meat warehouse; the renown of which establishments was duly heralded on their respective fronts. It was a little house, and this was the more convenient; for Mrs. Gamp being, in her highest walk of art, a monthly nurse, or, as her sign-board boldly had it, "Midwife," and lodging in the first-floor-front, was easily assailable at night by pebbles, walking-sticks, and fragments of tobacco-pipe — all much more efficacious than the street-door knocker, which was so constructed as to wake the street with ease, and even spread alarms of fire in Holborn, without making the smallest impression on the premises to which it was addressed.

…d on this particular occasion that Mrs. Gamp
…en up all the previous night, in attendance upon a cert
… which the usage of gossips has given that name t
…presses, in two syllables, the curse pronounced on A
…chanced that Mrs. Gamp had not been regularly eng
… had been called in at a crisis, in consequence of her
…ite, to assist another professional lady with her advice
… it happened that, all points of interest in the case
…ed, Mrs. Gamp had come home again to the bird-fanc
…nd gone to bed. So, when Mr. Pecksniff drove up i
…ackney-cab, Mrs. Gamp's curtains were drawn close, and
…Gamp was fast asleep behind them.

**If the bird-fancier had been at home, as he ought to**
**been, there would have been no great harm in this; h**
**was out, and his shop was closed. The shutters were**
**certainly; and in every pane of glass there was at leas**
**tiny bird in a tiny bird-cage, twittering and hopping his**
**ballet of despair, and knocking his head against the roof**
one unhappy goldfinch who lived outside a red villa wit
name on the door, drew the water for his own dr…
mutely appealed to some good man to drop a farthing …
of poison in it. Still, the door was shut. Mr. Pecksniff
the latch, and shook it, causing a cracked bell inside t
most mournfully, but no one came. The hairdresser …
easy shaver also, and a fashionable hair-dresser also …
haps he had been sent for, express, from the court end
town, to trim a lord or cut and curl a lady. But h…
might be, there, upon his own ground, he was …
there any more distinct trace of him to assist the …
of an inquirer, than a professional print or emblem of …
ing trench favoured in the trade, representing a barber
of easy manners curling a lady of distinguished fash…
presence of a patent upright grand pianoforte.

Noting these circumstances, Mr. Pecksniff, in the …
of his heart, applied himself to the knocker. Not at the
double-knock every window in the street became …
female heads, and before he could repeat the performa
whole troops of married ladies (some about to be …
Gamp themselves, very shortly) came flocking round the
all crying out with one accord, and with unexampled …
"Knock at the winder, sir, knock at the winder. Let

MIDWIFE
THE
HAIR DRESSER
DEPOT.

d, nooted and defied Mr. Pecksniff quite savagely. when Mrs. Gamp appeared, the unoffending gentlema glad to hustle her with very little ceremony into the cab and drive off, overwhelmed with popular execration.

Mrs. Gamp had a large bundle with her, a pair of pa and a species of gig umbrella; the latter article in colour a faded leaf, except where a circular patch of a lively bl been dexterously let in at the top. She was much flurri the haste she had made, and laboured under the most erro views of cabriolets, which she appeared to confound with coaches or stage-wagons, inasmuch as she was constantly deavouring for the first half-mile to force her luggage th the little front window, and clamouring to the driver to it in the boot." When she was disabused of this idea whole being resolved itself into an absorbing anxiety abo pattens, with which she played innumerable games at on Mr. Pecksniff's legs. It was not until they were upon the house of mourning that she had enough compas observe: —

"And so the gentleman's dead, sir! Ah! The the pity" — she did n't even know his name. "But we must all come to. It 's as certain as being b that we can't make our calculations as exact. W dear!"

She was a fat old woman, this Mrs. Gamp, with a voice and a moist eye, which she had a remarkable p turning up, and only showing the white of it. Having little neck, it cost her some trouble to look over herself may say so, at those to whom she talked. She wore a rusty black gown, rather the worse for stuff, and a crape bonnet to correspond. In these dilapidated articles of she had, on principle, arrayed herself, time out of on such occasions as the present, for this at once expres decent amount of veneration for the deceased, and gave next of kin to present her with a fresher suit of weeds appeal so frequently successful, that the very fetch and of Mrs. Gamp, bonnet and all, might be seen hanging hour in the day, in at least a dozen of the second-hand shops about Holborn. The face of Mrs. Gamp — the p particular — was somewhat red and swollen, and it was to enjoy her society without becoming conscious of a co

spirits. Like most persons who have attained to great eminence in their profession, she took to hers very kindly; insomuch, that setting aside her natural predilections as a woman, she went to a lying-in or a laying-out with equal zest and relish.

"Ah!" repeated Mrs. Gamp; for it was always a safe sentiment in cases of mourning. "Ah dear! When Gamp was summonsed to his long home, and I see him a lying in Guy's Hospital with a penny piece on each eye, and his wooden leg under his left arm, I thought I should have fainted away. But I bore up."

If certain whispers current in the Kingsgate Street circles had any truth in them, she had indeed borne up surprisingly; and had exerted such uncommon fortitude as to dispose of Mr. Gamp's remains for the benefit of science. But it should be added, in fairness, that this had happened twenty years before; and that Mr. and Mrs. Gamp had long been separated on the ground of incompatibility of temper in their drink.

"You have become indifferent since then, I suppose?" said Mr. Pecksniff. "Use is second nature, Mrs. Gamp."

"You may well say second nater, sir," returned that lady. "One's first ways is to find sich things a trial to the feelings, and so is one's lasting custom. If it was n't for the nerve a little sip of liquor gives me (I never was able to do more than taste it) I never could go through with what I sometimes has to do. 'Mrs. Harris,' I says, at the very last case as ever I acted in, which it was but a young person, 'Mrs. Harris,' I says, 'leave the bottle on the chimley-piece, and don't ask me to take none, but let me put my lips to it when I am so disposed, and then I will do what I 'm engaged to do, according to the best of my ability.' 'Mrs. Gamp,' she says, in answer, 'if ever there was a sober creetur to be got at eighteenpence a day for working people, and three and six for gentlefolks — night watching,'" said Mrs. Gamp, with emphasis, "'being a extra charge — you are that inwallable person.' 'Mrs. Harris,' I says to her, 'don't name the charge, for if I could afford to lay all my feller creeturs out for nothink, I would gladly do it, sich is the love I bears 'em. But what I always says to them as has the management of matters, Mrs. Harris'" — here she kept her eye on Mr. Pecksniff — "'be they gents or be they ladies — is, don't ask me whether I won't take none, or

I will, but leave the bottle on the chimley-piece,
me put my lips to it when I am so disposed."
The conclusion of this affecting narrative brought them
house. In the passage they encountered Mr. Mould
taker; a little elderly gentleman, bald, and in a su
; with a note-book in his hand, a massive gold wa
an dangling from his fob, and a face in which a quee
apt at melancholy was at odds with a smirk of satisfact
that he looked as a man might, who, in the very ac
macking his lips over choice old wine, tried to make bel
it was physic.

"Well, Mrs. Gamp, and how are you, Mrs. Gamp?" s
this gentleman, in a voice as soft as his step.

"Pretty well, I thank you, sir," dropping a curtsey.

"You 'll be very particular here, Mrs. Gamp. This is
a common case, Mrs. Gamp. Let everything be very nice
comfortable, Mrs. Gamp, if you please," said the undertak
shaking his head with a solemn air.

"It shall be, sir," she replied, curtseying again. "I
knows me of old, sir, I hope."

"I hope so, too, Mrs. Gamp," said the undertaker. "I
think so also." Mrs. Gamp curtseyed again. "This is
of the most impressive cases, sir," he continued, addressing
Pecksniff, "that I have seen in the whole course of my pro
sional experience."

"Indeed, Mr. Mould!" cried that gentleman.

"Such affectionate regret, sir, I never saw. There is
limitation — there is positively no limitation," — opening
eyes wide, and standing on tiptoe, "in point of expense
have orders, sir! to put on my whole establishment for
and mutes come very dear, Mr. Pecksniff, not to mention t
drink. To provide silver-plated handles of the very best
scription, ornamented with angels' heads from the most ex
sive dies. To be perfectly profuse in feathers. In short
to turn out something absolutely gorgeous."

"My friend Mr. Jonas is an excellent man," said Mr. P
sniff.

"I have seen a good deal of what is filial in my time,"
retorted Mould, "and what is unfilial too. It is not be
come into the knowledge of those secrets. But anything
filial as this, anything so honourable to human nature, a

ed to reconcile all of us to the world we live in, never yet
under my observation. It only proves, sir, what was so
bly observed by the lamented theatrical poet — buried at
ford — that there is good in everything."
[t is very pleasant to hear you say so, Mr. Mould," ob-
d Pecksniff.
You are very kind, sir. And what a man Mr. Chuzzlewit
sir! Ah! what a man he was. You may talk of your
mayors," said Mould, waving his hand at the public in
ral, "your sheriffs, your common councilmen, your trump-
but show me a man in this city who is worthy to walk in
shoes of the departed Mr. Chuzzlewit. No, no," cried
ld, with bitter sarcasm. "Hang 'em up, hang 'em up:
'em and heel 'em, and have 'em ready for his son against
old enough to wear 'em; but don't try 'em on yourselves,
hey won't fit you. We knew him," said Mould, in the
biting vein, as he pocketed his note-book; "we knew
and are not to be caught with chaff. Mr. Pecksniff, sir,
morning."
r. Pecksniff returned the compliment; and Mould, sensi-
of having distinguished himself, was going away with a
smile, when he fortunately remembered the occasion.
kly becoming depressed again, he sighed; looked into the
n of his hat, as if for comfort; put it on without finding
and slowly departed.
rs. Gamp and Mr. Pecksniff then ascended the staircase;
the former, having been shown to the chamber in which
iat remained of Anthony Chuzzlewit lay covered up, with
one loving heart, and that a halting one, to mourn it, left
atter free to enter the darkened room below, and rejoin
Jonas, from whom he had now been absent nearly two
s.
e found that example to bereaved sons and pattern in the
of all performers of funerals musing over a fragment of
ng-paper on the desk, and scratching figures on it with a
The old man's chair, and hat, and walking-stick were
ved from their accustomed places, and put out of sight;
window-blinds, as yellow as November fogs, were drawn
close; Jonas himself was so subdued, that he could
ely be heard to speak, and only seen to walk across the

Pecksniff," he said, in a whisper, "you shall have
gulation of it all, mind! You shall be able to tell any
so talks about it that everything was correctly and
done. There is n't any one you 'd like to ask to the fu
is there?"

"No, Mr. Jonas, I think not."

"Because if there is, you know," said Jonas, "ask
We don't want to make a secret of it."

"No," repeated Mr. Pecksniff, after a little reflection.
am not the less obliged to you on that account, Mr. Jonas
your liberal hospitality; but there really is no one."

"Very well," said Jonas; "then you, and I, and Ch
and the doctor, will be just a coachful. We 'll have the
tor, Pecksniff, because he knows what was the matter
him, and that it could n't be helped."

"Where *is* our dear friend, Mr. Chuffey?" asked Pecks
looking round the chamber, and winking both his eyes at
— for he was overcome by his feelings.

But here he was interrupted by Mrs. Gamp, who, div
of her bonnet and shawl, came sidling and bridling
room, and, with some sharpness, demanded a conference
side the door with Mr Pecksniff.

"You may say whatever you wish to say here, Mrs Gam
said that gentleman, shaking his head with a melancholy
pression.

"It is not much as I have to say, when people is a
ing for the dead and gone," said Mrs. Gamp. "But wh
have to say is to the point and purpose, and no offence
must be so considered. I have been at a many places
time, gentlemen, and I hope I knows what my duties
how the same should be performed, in course, if I
would be very strange, and very wrong in such a gentlema
Mr Mould, which has undertook the highest families
land, and given every satisfaction, so to recommend me
does. I have seen a deal of trouble my own self," said
Gamp, laying greater and greater stress upon her w
I can feel for them as has their feelings tried, but I am
Roosian or a Prooshian, and consequently cannot suffer
to be set over me."

Before it was possible that an answer could be returned
Gamp, growing redder in the face, went on to say —

"It is not a easy matter, gentlemen, to live when you are left a widder woman; particular when your feelings works upon you to that extent that you often find yourself a going out, on terms which is a certain loss, and never can repay. But, in whatever way you earns your bread, you may have rules and regulations of your own, which cannot be broke through. Some people," said Mrs. Gamp, again entrenching herself behind her strong point, as if it were not assailable by human ingenuity, "may be Rooshans, and others may be Prooshans; they are born so, and will please themselves. Them which is of other naturs thinks different."

"If I understand this good lady," said Mr. Pecksniff, turning to Jonas, "Mr. Chuffey is troublesome to her. Shall I fetch him down?"

"Do," said Jonas. "I was going to tell you he was up there, when she came in. I'd go myself and bring him down, only — only I'd rather you went, if you don't mind."

Mr. Pecksniff promptly departed, followed by Mrs. Gamp, who, seeing that he took a bottle and glass from the cupboard, and carried it in his hand, was much softened.

"I am sure," she said, "that if it was n't for his own happiness, I should no more mind his being there, poor dear, than if he was a fly. But them as is n't used to these things, thinks so much of 'em afterwards, that it 's a kindness to 'em not to let 'em have their wish. And even," said Mrs. Gamp, probably in reference to some flowers of speech she had already strewn on Mr. Chuffey, "even if one calls 'em names, it 's only done to rouse 'em."

Whatever epithets she had bestowed on the old clerk, they had not roused *him*. He sat beside the bed, in the chair he had occupied all the previous night, with his hands folded before him, and his head bowed down; and neither looked up on their entrance, nor gave any sign of consciousness, until Mr. Pecksniff took him by the arm, when he meekly rose.

"Three score and ten," said Chuffey, "ought and carry seven. Some men are so strong that they live to fourscore — four times ought 's an ought, four times two 's an eight — eighty. Oh! why — why — why did n't he live to four times ought 's an ought, and four times two 's an eight, eighty?"

"Ah! what a wale of grief!" cried Mrs. Gamp, possessing herself of the bottle and glass.

d he die before his poor old, crazy servant!"
ttey, clasping his hands and looking up in anguish. "I
om me, and what remains!"
. Jonas," returned Pecksniff, "Mr. Jonas, my
ng."
"I loved him," cried the old man weeping. "He was
me. We learnt Tare and Tret together, at school. I
n down once, six boys, in the arithmetic class. God for
e! Had I the heart to take him down!"
"Come, Mr. Chuffey," said Pecksniff, "come with
summon up your fortitude, Mr. Chuffey."
"Yes, I will," returned the old clerk. "Yes. I'll
up my forty — How many times forty — Oh, Chuzzlewit
Son — your own son, Mr. Chuzzlewit; your own son, sir!"
He yielded to the hand that guided him, as he lapsed
this familiar expression, and submitted to be led away.
Gamp, with the bottle on one knee, and the glass on the o
sat upon a stool, shaking her head for a long time, until
moment of abstraction, she poured out a dram of sperits
raised it to her lips. It was succeeded by a second and
third, and then her eyes — either in the sadness of her
tions upon life and death, or in her admiration of the
were so turned up as to be quite invisible. But she
her head still.

Poor Chuffey was conducted to his accustomed
there he remained, silent and quiet, save at long inter
when he would rise, and walk about the room, and wring
hands, or raise some strange and sudden cry. For a
week they all three sat about the hearth and never
abroad. Mr. Pecksniff would have walked out in the
time, but Jonas was so averse to his being absent for a
that he abandoned the idea, and so, from morning until
they brooded together in the dark room, without relief
pation.

The weight of that which was stretched out, stiff and
in the awful chamber above stairs, so crushed and bore
Jonas, that he bent beneath the load. During the whole
seven days and nights, he was always oppressed and
by a dreadful sense of its presence in the house. Not the
move, he looked towards it with a livid face and starting
as if he fully believed that ghostly fingers clutched the

Did the fire flicker in a draught of air, he glanced over his shoulder, as almost dreading to behold some shrouded figure fanning and flapping at it with its fearful dress. The lightest noise disturbed him; and once in the night, at the sound of a footstep overhead, he cried out that the dead man was walking, — tramp, tramp, tramp, — about his coffin.

He lay at night upon a mattress on the floor of the sitting-room, his own chamber having been assigned to Mrs. Gamp; and Mr. Pecksniff was similarly accommodated. The howling of a dog before the house filled him with a terror he could not disguise. He avoided the reflection in the opposite windows of the light that burned above, as though it had been an angry eye. He often, in every night, rose up from his fitful sleep, and looked and longed for dawn; all directions and arrangements, even to the ordering of their daily meals, he abandoned to Mr. Pecksniff. That excellent gentleman, deeming that the mourner wanted comfort, and that high feeding was likely to do him infinite service, availed himself of these opportunities to such good purpose that they kept quite a dainty table during this melancholy season; with sweetbreads, stewed kidneys, oysters, and other such light viands for supper every night; over which, and sundry jorums of hot punch, Mr. Pecksniff delivered such moral reflections and spiritual consolation as might have converted a Heathen — especially if he had had but an imperfect acquaintance with the English tongue.

Nor did Mr. Pecksniff alone indulge in the creature comforts during this sad time. Mrs. Gamp proved to be very choice in her eating, and repudiated hash mutton with scorn. In her drinking, too, she was very punctual and particular, requiring a pint of mild porter at lunch, a pint at dinner, half a pint as a species of stay or holdfast between dinner and tea, and a pint of the celebrated staggering ale, or Real Old Brighton Tipper, at supper; besides the bottle on the chimney-piece, and such casual invitations to refresh herself with wine as the good-breeding of her employers might prompt them to offer. In like manner, Mr. Mould's men found it necessary to drown their grief, like a young kitten, in the morning of its existence; for which reason they generally fuddled themselves before they began to do anything, lest it should make head and get the better of them. In short, the whole of that strange week was a round of dismal joviality and grim enjoyment; and every

poor Chuffey, who came within the shadow
huzzlewit's grave, feasted like a Ghoul.
ngth the day of the funeral, pious and truthful o
sant it was, arrived. Mr. Mould, with a glass of po
rt between his eye and the light, leaned against the d
little glass office with his gold watch in his unoccup
, and conversed with Mrs. Gamp; two mutes were st
se-door, looking as mournful as could be reasonably expe
men with such a thriving job in hand; the whole of
uld's establishment were on duty within the house or wi
; feathers waved, horses snorted, silks and velvets flutte
a word, as Mr. Mould emphatically said, "everything t
ey could do was done."

"And what can do more, Mrs. Gamp!" exclaimed the
dertaker, as he emptied his glass, and smacked his lips.

"Nothing in the world, sir."

"Nothing in the world," repeated Mr. Mould. "You
right, Mrs. Gamp. Why do people spend more money"
here he filled his glass again — "upon a death, Mrs. Ga
than upon a birth? Come, that's in your way, you
know. How do you account for that now?"

"Perhaps it is because an undertaker's charges
than a nurse's charges, sir," said Mrs. Gamp titterin
smoothing down her new black dress with her hands.

"Ha, ha!" laughed Mr. Mould. "You have been
fasting at somebody's expense this morning, Mrs. Gamp
But seeing, by the aid of a little shaving-glass which
opposite, that he looked merry, he composed his feature
became sorrowful.

"Many's the time that I've not breakfasted at m
expense along of your kind recommending, sir, and I hope
the time I hope to do the same in time to come," said M
Gamp, with an apologetic curtsey.

"So be it," replied Mr. Mould, "please Providence. N
Mrs. Gamp. I'll tell you why it is. It's because the la
out of money with a well-conducted establishment, where
thing is performed upon the very best scale, binds the wo
heart, and sheds balm upon the wounded spirit. Hearts w
binding, and spirits want balming when people die as w
people are born. Look at this gentleman to-day, and
him."

"An open-handed gentleman!" cried Mrs. Gamp, with enthusiasm.

"No, no," said the undertaker; "not an open-handed gentleman in general, by any means. There you mistake him; but an afflicted gentleman — an affectionate gentleman — who knows what it is in the power of money to do in giving him relief, and in testifying his love and veneration for the departed. It can give him," said Mr. Mould, waving his watch-chain slowly round and round, so that he described one circle after every item; "it can give him four horses to each vehicle; it can give him velvet trappings; it can give him drivers in cloth cloaks and top-boots; it can give him the plumage of the ostrich, dyed black; it can give him any number of walking attendants, dressed in the first style of funeral fashion, and carrying batons tipped with brass; it can give him a handsome tomb; it can give him a place in Westminster Abbey itself, if he choose to invest it in such a purchase. Oh! do not let us say that gold is dross, when it can buy such things as these, Mrs. Gamp."

"But what a blessing, sir," said Mrs. Gamp, "that there are such as you, to sell or let 'em out on hire!"

"Ay, Mrs. Gamp, you are right," rejoined the undertaker. "We should be an honoured calling. We do good by stealth, and blush to have it mentioned in our little bills. How much consolation may I — even I" — cried Mr. Mould, "have diffused among my fellow-creatures by means of my four long-tailed prancers, never harnessed under ten pund ten!"

Mrs. Gamp had begun to make a suitable reply, when she was interrupted by the appearance of one of Mr. Mould's assistants — his chief mourner in fact — an obese person, with his waistcoat in closer connection with his legs than is quite reconcilable with the established ideas of grace; with that cast of feature which is figuratively called a bottle-nose, and with a face covered all over with pimples. He had been a tender plant once upon a time, but from constant blowing in the fat atmosphere of funerals had run to seed.

"Well, Tacker," said Mr. Mould, "is all ready below?"

"A beautiful show, sir," rejoined Tacker. "The horses are prouder and fresher than ever I see 'em; and toss their heads, they do, as if they knowed how much their plumes cost. One, two, three, four," said Mr. Tacker, heaping that number of black cloaks upon his left arm.

"Is Tom there, with the cake and wine?" asked ould.

"Ready to come in at a moment's notice, sir," said Tac

"Then," rejoined Mr. Mould, putting up his watch, ncing at himself in the little shaving-glass, that he migh e his face had the right expression on it; "then I think proceed to business. Give me the paper of gl ker. Ah what a man he was! Ah Tacker, Tacker, man he was!"

Mr. Tacker, who from his great experience in the per ance of funerals, would have made an excellent panto actor, winked at Mrs. Gamp without at all disturbing the ity of his countenance, and followed his master into the room.

It was a great point with Mr. Mould, and a part of his fessional tact, not to seem to know the doctor — though reality they were near neighbours, and very often, as in present instance, worked together. So he advanced to t his black kid gloves as if he had never seen him in all his while the doctor, on his part, looked as distant and re as if he had heard and read of undertakers, and had pa their shops, but had never before been brought into a cation with one.

"Gloves, eh!" said the doctor. "Mr. Pecksniff, after y

"I couldn't think of it," returned Mr Pecksniff

"You are very good," said the doctor, taking a "Well, sir, as I was saying — I was called up to attend case at about half-past one o'clock. Cake and wine, which is part? Thank you."

Mr. Pecksniff took some also.

"At about half-past one o'clock in the morning, re sumed the doctor, "I was called up to attend that the first pull of the night-bell I turned out, threw up the dow, and put out my head. Cloak, eh! Don't be a tight. That 'll do."

Mr Pecksniff having been likewise inducted into a ga garment, the doctor resumed: —

"And put out my head — hat, eh! My good friend, tha not mine. Mr. Pecksniff, I beg your pardon, but I think have unintentionally made an exchange. Thank you. W sir, I was going to tell you — "

"We are quite ready," interrupted Mould in a low voice.

"Ready, eh?" said the doctor. "Very good. Mr. Pecksniff, I 'll take an opportunity of relating the rest in the coach. It 's rather curious. Ready, eh? No rain, I hope?"

"Quite fair, sir," returned Mould.

"I was afraid the ground would have been wet," said the doctor, "for my glass fell yesterday. We may congratulate ourselves upon our good fortune." But seeing by this time that Mr. Jonas and Chuffey were going out at the door, he put a white pocket-handkerchief to his face as if a violent burst of grief had suddenly come upon him, and walked down side by side with Mr. Pecksniff.

Mr. Mould and his men had not exaggerated the grandeur of the arrangements. They were splendid. The four hearse-horses, especially, reared and pranced, and showed their highest action, as if they knew a man was dead, and triumphed in it. "They break us, drive us, ride us; ill treat, abuse, and maim us for their pleasure — But they die; hurrah, they die!"

So through the narrow streets and winding city ways went Anthony Chuzzlewit's funeral: Mr. Jonas glancing stealthily out of the coach-window now and then, to observe its effect upon the crowd; Mr. Mould, as he walked along, listening with a sober pride to the exclamations of the by-standers; the doctor whispering his story to Mr. Pecksniff, without appearing to come any nearer the end of it; and poor old Chuffey sobbing unregarded in a corner. But he had greatly scandalised Mr. Mould at an early stage of the ceremony by carrying his handkerchief in his hat in a perfectly informal manner, and wiping his eyes with his knuckles. And as Mr. Mould himself had said already, his behaviour was indecent, and quite unworthy of such an occasion, and he never ought to have been there.

There he was, however; and in the churchyard there he was, also, conducting himself in a no less unbecoming manner, and leaning for support on Tacker, who plainly told him that he was fit for nothing better than a walking funeral. But Chuffey, Heaven help him! heard no sound but the echoes, lingering in his own heart, of a voice for ever silent.

"I loved him," cried the old man, sinking down upon the grave when all was done. "He was very good to me. Oh, my dear old friend and master!"

come, Mr. Chuffey," said the doctor, "this
n a clayey soil, Mr. Chuffey. You must n't really
"If it had been the commonest thing we do, and Mr. Ch
d been a Bearer, gentlemen," said Mould, casting an in
glance upon them, as he helped to raise him, "he cou
e gone on worse than this."
"Be a man, Mr. Chuffey," said Pecksniff.
"Be a gentleman, Mr. Chuffey," said Mould.
"Upon my word, my good friend," murmured the doct
a tone of stately reproof, as he stepped up to the old
side, "this is worse than weakness. This is bad, selfish,
wrong, Mr. Chuffey. You should take example from o
my good sir. You forget that you were not connected b
of blood with our deceased friend; and that he had a very
and very dear relation, Mr. Chuffey."
"Ay, his own son!" cried the old man, clasping his
with remarkable passion. "His own, own, only son!"
"He 's not right in his head, you know," said Jonas, tu
pale. "You 're not to mind anything he says. I ab
wonder if he was to talk some precious nonsense. But
you mind him, any of you. I don't. My father left
my charge, and whatever he says or does, that o
take care of him."
A hum of admiration rose from the mourners
Mould and his merry men at this new instance
and kind feeling on the part of Jonas. But
the test no farther. He said not a word more,
to himself for a little while, crept back again to
It has been said that Mr. Jonas turned pale when
nour of the old clerk attracted general attention
sure, however, was but momentary, and he
But these were not the only changes he had exhibited
The curious eyes of Mr. Pecksniff had observed that
they left the house upon their mournful errand,
mend, that as the ceremonies proceeded he gradually
and little, recovered his old condition, his old
bearing, his old agreeable characteristics of speech
and became, in all respects, his old pleasant self.
that they were seated in the coach on their return
more when they got there, and found the wind
light and air admitted, and all traces of the late event

he felt so well convinced that Jonas was again the Jonas he had known a week ago, and not the Jonas of the intervening time, that he voluntarily gave up his recently-acquired power without one faint attempt to exercise it, and at once fell back into his former position of mild and deferential guest.

Mrs. Gamp went home to the bird-fancier's, and was knocked up again that very night for a birth of twins; Mr. Mould dined gaily in the bosom of his family, and passed the evening facetiously at his club; the hearse, after standing for a long time at the door of a roystering public-house, repaired to its stables with the feathers inside and twelve red-nosed undertakers on the roof, each holding on by a dingy peg, to which, in times of state, a waving plume was fitted; the various trappings of sorrow were carefully laid by in presses for the next hirer; the fiery steeds were quenched and quiet in their stalls; the doctor got merry with wine at a wedding-dinner, and forgot the middle of the story which had no end to it; the pageant of a few short hours ago was written nowhere half so legibly as in the undertaker's books.

Not in the churchyard? Not even there. The gates were closed; the night was dark and wet; and the rain fell silently among the stagnant weeds and nettles. One new mound was there which had not been last night. Time, burrowing like a mole below the ground, had marked his track by throwing up another heap of earth. And that was all.

## CHAPTER XX

### IS A CHAPTER OF LOVE.

"PECKSNIFF," said Jonas, taking off his hat, to see that the black crape band was all right, and finding that it was, put it on again, complacently; "what do you mean to give your daughters when they marry?"

"My dear Mr. Jonas," cried the affectionate parent, with an ingenuous smile, "what a very singular inquiry!"

"Now, don't you mind whether it 's a singular inquiry or a plural one," retorted Jonas, eyeing Mr. Pecksniff with no favour, "but answer it, or let it alone. One or the other."

"Hum! The question, my dear friend," said Mr. Pecksniff, laying his hand tenderly upon his kinsman's knee, "is one with many considerations. What would I give them!"

"Ah! what would you give 'em!" repeated Jonas.

"Why, that," said Mr. Pecksniff, "would naturally depend in a great measure upon the kind of husbands they might choose, my dear young friend."

Mr. Jonas was evidently disconcerted, and at a loss how to proceed. It was a good answer. It seemed a deep one, such is the wisdom of simplicity!

"My standard for the merits I would require in a son-in-law," said Mr. Pecksniff, after a short silence, "is a high one. Forgive me, my dear Mr. Jonas," he added, greatly moved, "if I say that you have spoiled me, and made it a fastidious and imaginative one, a prismatically tinged one, if I may be permitted to call it so."

"What do you mean by that!" growled Jonas, looking at him with more and more disfavour.

"Indeed, my dear friend," said Mr. Pecksniff, "you may well inquire. The heart is not always a royal mint, with proper machinery, to work its metal into current coin. Sometimes it throws it out in strange forms, not easily recognised as coin at all. But it is sterling gold. It has at least that merit. It is sterling gold."

"Is it?" grumbled Jonas, with a doubtful shake of the head.

"Ay!" said Mr. Pecksniff, warming with his subject, "it is. To be plain with you, Mr. Jonas, if I could find two such sons-in-law as you will one day make to some deserving man, capable of appreciating a nature such as yours, I would — forgetful of myself — bestow upon my daughters, portions reaching to the very utmost limit of my means."

This was strong language, and it was earnestly delivered. But who can wonder that such a man as Mr. Pecksniff, after all he had seen and heard of Mr. Jonas, should be strong and earnest upon such a theme; a theme that touched even the worldly lips of undertakers with the honey of eloquence!

Mr. Jonas was silent, and looked thoughtfully at the landscape. For they were seated on the outside of the coach, at the back, and were travelling down into the country. He accompanied Mr. Pecksniff home for a few days' change of air and scene after his recent trials.

"Well," he said, at last, with captivating bluntness, "suppose you got one such son-in-law as me, what then?"

Mr. Pecksniff regarded him at first with inexpressible surprise; then gradually breaking into a sort of dejected vivacity, said: —

"Then well I know whose husband he would be!"

"Whose?" asked Jonas drily.

"My eldest girl's, Mr. Jonas," replied Pecksniff, with moistening eyes. "My dear Cherry's — my staff, my scrip, my treasure, Mr. Jonas. A hard struggle, but it is in the nature of things! I must one day part with her to a husband. I know it, my dear friend. I am prepared for it."

"Ecod! you 've been prepared for that a pretty long time, I should think," said Jonas.

"Many have sought to bear her from me," said Mr. Pecksniff. "All have failed. 'I never will give my hand, papa,' — those were her words, 'unless my heart is won.' She has not been quite so happy as she used to be, of late. I don't know why."

Again Mr. Jonas looked at the landscape; then at the coachman; then at the luggage on the roof; finally at Mr. Pecksniff.

"I suppose you 'll have to part with the other one, some of these days?" he observed, as he caught that gentleman's eye.

"Probably," said the parent. "Years will tame down the

— of my foolish bird, and then it will be exposed.
nerry, Mr. Jonas, Cherry —"

"Oh, ah!" interrupted Jonas. "Years have made he
ght enough. Nobody doubts that. But you haven't
ered what I asked you. Of course, you 're not oblig
o it, you know, if you don't like. You 're the best jud

There was a warning sulkiness in the manner of this s
which admonished Mr. Pecksniff that his dear friend w
o be trifled with or fenced off, and that he must either
a straightforward reply to his question, or plainly give h
nderstand that he declined to enlighten him upon the s
o which it referred. Mindful in this dilemma of the c
Old Anthony had given him almost with his latest brea
resolved to speak to the point, and so told Mr. Jonas — s
ing upon the communication as a proof of his great attac
and confidence — that in the case he had put, to wit, t
event of such a man as he proposing for his daughter's
**he would endow her with a fortune of four thousand pou**

"I should sadly pinch and cramp myself to do so," w
fatherly remark, "but that would be my duty, and my
science would reward me. For myself, my conscience
bank. I have a trifle invested there — a mere trifle,
Jonas — but I prize it as a store of value, I assure y

The good man's enemies would have divided upon this
tion into two parties. One would have asserted without
ple that if Mr. Pecksniff's conscience were his bank, an
kept a running account there, he must have overdrawn
beyond all mortal means of computation. The other w
have contended that it was a mere fictitious form — a pas
blank book, or one in which entries were only made w
peculiar kind of invisible ink to become legible at some
nite time, and that he never troubled it at all.

"It would sadly pinch and cramp me, my dear fri
repeated Mr. Pecksniff, "but Providence — perhaps I ma
permitted to say a special Providence — has blessed my ef
ours, and I could guarantee to make the sacrifice."

A question of philosophy arises here, whether Mr. Pec
had or had not good reason to say that he was specially ma
ted and encouraged in his undertakings. All his life
he had been walking up and down the narrow ways and
places, with a hook in one hand and a crook in the o

scraping all sorts of valuable odds and ends into his pouch. Now, there being a special Providence in the fall of a sparrow, it follows (so Mr. Pecksniff, and only such admirable men, would have reasoned), that there must also be a special Providence in the alighting of the stone, or stick, or other substance which is aimed at the sparrow. And Mr. Pecksniff's hook, or crook, having invariably knocked the sparrow on the head and brought him down, that gentleman may have been led to consider himself as specially licensed to bag sparrows, and as being specially seised and possessed of all the birds he had got together. That many undertakings, national as well as individual — but especially the former — are held to be specially brought to a glorious and successful issue, which never could be so regarded on any other process of reasoning, must be clear to all men. Therefore the precedents would seem to show that Mr. Pecksniff had (as things go) good argument for what he said, and might be permitted to say it, and did not say it presumptuously, vainly, or arrogantly, but in a spirit of high faith and great wisdom.

Mr. Jonas, not being much accustomed to perplex his mind with theories of this nature, expressed no opinion on the subject. Nor did he receive his companion's announcement with one solitary syllable, good, bad, or indifferent. He preserved his taciturnity for a quarter of an hour at least, and during the whole of that time appeared to be steadily engaged in subjecting some given amount to the operation of every known rule in figures, — adding to it, taking from it, multiplying it, reducing it by long and short division; working it by the rule-of-three direct and inversed; exchange or barter; practice; simple interest; compound interest; and other means of arithmetical calculation. The result of these labours appeared to be satisfactory, for when he did break silence, it was as one who had arrived at some specific result, and freed himself from a state of distressing uncertainty.

"Come, old Pecksniff!" — such was his jocose address, as he slapped that gentleman on the back, at the end of the stage — "let 's have something!"

"With all my heart," said Mr. Pecksniff.

"Let 's treat the driver," cried Jonas.

"If you think it won't hurt the man, or render him discontented with his station — certainly," faltered Mr. Pecksniff.

onas only laughed at this, and getting down from
oach-top with great alacrity, cut a cumbersome kind of
n the road. After which, he went into the public-house,
there ordered spirituous drink to such an extent that Mr.
sniff had some doubts of his perfect sanity, until Jonas
them quite at rest by saying, when the coach could wa
longer:—

"I've been standing treat for a whole week and more
letting you have all the delicacies of the season. You
pay for this, Pecksniff." It was not a joke either, as
Pecksniff at first supposed; for he went off to the coach
out further ceremony, and left his respected victim to
the bill.

But Mr. Pecksniff was a man of meek endurance, and
Jonas was his friend. Moreover, his regard for that gent
was founded, as we know, on pure esteem, and a knowled
the excellence of his character. He came out from the t
with a smiling face, and even went so far as to repeat the
formance, on a less expensive scale, at the next ale-h
There was a certain wildness in the spirits of Mr. Jon
usually a part of his character) which was far from be
duced by these means, and, for the rest of the journey,
so very buoyant — it may be said, boisterous — that Mr.
sniff had some difficulty in keeping pace with him.

They were not expected — oh dear, no! Mr. Pecksni
proposed in London to give the girls a surprise, and ha
he wouldn't write a word to prepare them on any accou
order that he and Mr. Jonas might take them unaware
just see what they were doing, when they thought their
papa was miles and miles away. As a consequence of
playful device, there was nobody to meet them at the c
post, but that was of small consequence, for they had
down by the day coach, and Mr. Pecksniff had only a s
bag, while Mr. Jonas had only a portmanteau. They ha
portmanteau between them, put the bag upon it, and w
off up the lane without delay. Mr. Pecksniff already gr
tingles, as if, without this precaution, his fond children
them at a distance of a couple of miles or so, would have
filial sense of his approach.

It was a lovely evening, in the spring-time of the year
in the soft stillness of the twilight, all nature was very

and beautiful. The day had been fine and warm; but at the coming on of night the air grew cool, and in the mellowing distance smoke was rising gently from the cottage chimneys. There were a thousand pleasant scents diffused around, from young leaves and fresh buds; the cuckoo had been singing all day long, and was but just now hushed; the smell of earth, newly-upturned — first breath of hope to the first labourer, after his garden withered — was fragrant in the evening breeze. It was a time when most men cherish good resolves, and sorrow for the wasted past; when most men, looking on the shadows as they gather, think of that evening which must close on all and that to-morrow which has none beyond.

"Precious dull," said Mr. Jonas, looking about. "It's enough to make a man go melancholy mad."

"We shall have lights and a fire soon," observed Mr. Pecksniff.

"We shall need 'em by the time we get there," said Jonas. "Why the devil don't you talk? What are you thinking of?"

"To tell you the truth, Mr. Jonas," said Pecksniff with great solemnity, "my mind was running at that moment on our late dear friend, your departed father."

Mr. Jonas immediately let his burden fall, and said, threatening him with his hand: —

"Drop that, Pecksniff!"

Mr. Pecksniff not exactly knowing whether allusion was made to the subject or the portmanteau, stared at his friend in unaffected surprise.

"Drop it, I say!" cried Jonas fiercely. "Do you hear? Drop it — now and for ever. You had better, I give you notice!"

"It was quite a mistake," urged Mr. Pecksniff, very much dismayed; "though I admit it was foolish. I might have known it was a tender string."

"Don't talk to me about tender strings," said Jonas. "I'm not going to be crowed over by you, because I don't like dead company."

Mr. Pecksniff had got out the words "Crowed over, Mr. Jonas!" when that young man, with a dark expression in his countenance, cut him short once more: —

"Mind!" he said, "I won't have it. I advise you not to revive the subject, neither to me nor anybody else. You can

[illegible] it, if you choose, as well as another man. The [illegible] ugh said about it. Come along!"

Taking up his part of the load again, when he had said [illegible] rds, he hurried on so fast that Mr. Pecksniff, at the [illegible] of the portmanteau, found himself dragged forward [illegible] very inconvenient and ungraceful manner, to the great [illegible] ment of what is called by fancy gentlemen "the bark" [illegible] his shins, which were most unmercifully bumped against [illegible] hard leather and the iron buckles. In the course of a [illegible] minutes, however, Mr. Jonas relaxed his speed and suffered [illegible] companion to come up with him and to bring the portman[illegible] into a tolerably straight position.

It was pretty clear that he regretted his late outbreak, [illegible] that he mistrusted its effect on Mr. Pecksniff; for as oft[illegible] that gentleman glanced towards Mr. Jonas, he found [illegible] Jonas glancing at him, which was a new source of embar[illegible] ment. It was but a short-lived one though, for Mr. J[illegible] soon began to whistle, whereupon Mr. Pecksniff, taking [illegible] cue from his friend, began to hum a tune melodiously.

"Pretty nearly there, ain't we?" said Jonas, when [illegible] lasted some time.

"Close, my dear friend," said Mr. Pecksniff.

"What'll they be doing, do you suppose?" asked Jonas.

"Impossible to say," cried Mr. Pecksniff. "Giddy [illegible] They may be away from home, perhaps. I was going to [illegible] he, he! — I was going to propose," said Mr. Pecksniff, [illegible] we should enter by the back way, and come upon them [illegible] clap of thunder, Mr. Jonas."

It might not have been easy to decide in respect of [illegible] their manifold properties, Jonas, Mr. Pecksniff, the [illegible] and the portmanteau could be likened to a clap of [illegible] But Mr. Jonas giving his assent to this proposal, they [illegible] round into the back yard, and softly advanced towards [illegible] kitchen window, through which the mingled light of [illegible] candle shone upon the darkening night.

Truly Mr. Pecksniff is blessed in his children [illegible] them, at any rate. The prudent Cherry — staff and [illegible] treasure of her doting father — there she sits, at a little [illegible] white as driven snow, before the kitchen fire, making [illegible] accounts! See the neat maiden, as with pen in hand, [illegible] calculating look addressed towards the ceiling, and [illegible]

keys within a little basket at her side, she checks the housekeeping expenditure! From flat-iron, dish-cover, and warming-pan; from pot and kettle, face of brass footman, and black-leaded stove; bright glances of approbation wink and glow upon her. The very onions dangling from the beam mantle and shine like cherubs' cheeks. Something of the influence of those vegetables sinks into Mr. Pecksniff's nature. He weeps.

It is but for a moment, and he hides it from the observation of his friend — very carefully — by a somewhat elaborate use of his pocket-handkerchief, in fact; for he would not have his weakness known.

"Pleasant," he murmured — "pleasant to a father's feelings! My dear girl! Shall we let her know we are here, Mr. Jonas?"

"Why, I suppose you don't mean to spend the evening in the stable or the coach-house," he returned.

"That, indeed, is not such hospitality as I would show to *you*, my friend," cried Mr. Pecksniff, pressing his hand. And then he took a long breath, and tapping at the window, shouted with stentorian blandness: —

"Boh!"

Cherry dropped her pen and screamed. But innocence is ever bold — or should be. As they opened the door, the valiant girl exclaimed in a firm voice, and with a presence of mind which even in that trying moment did not desert her, "Who are you? What do you want? Speak! or I will call my pa."

Mr. Pecksniff held out his arms. She knew him instantly, and rushed into his fond embrace.

"It was thoughtless of us, Mr. Jonas, it was very thoughtless," said Pecksniff, smoothing his daughter's hair. "My darling, do you see that I am not alone!"

Not she. She had seen nothing but her father until now. She saw Mr. Jonas now, though; and blushed, and hung her head down, as she gave him welcome.

But where was Merry? Mr. Pecksniff did n't ask the question in reproach, but in a vein of mildness touched with a gentle sorrow. She was up stairs, reading on the parlour couch. Ah! Domestic details had no charms for *her*. "But call her down," said Mr. Pecksniff, with a placid resignation. "Call her down, my love."

She was called and came, all flushed and tumbled from

on the sofa; but none the worse for that. No, s
rather the better, if anything.

"Oh, my goodness me!" cried the arch girl, turning
cousin when she had kissed her father on both cheek
in her frolicsome nature had bestowed a supernumerary
upon the tip of his nose, "*you* here, fright! Well, I'm
thankful that you won't trouble *me* much!"

"What! you're as lively as ever, are you?" said
"Oh! You're a wicked one!"

"There, go along!" retorted Merry, pushing him
"I'm sure I don't know what I shall ever do, if I have
much of you. Go along, for gracious' sake!"

Mr. Pecksniff striking in here, with a request th
Jonas would immediately walk up stairs, he so far co
with the young lady's adjuration as to go at once. But
he had the fair Cherry on his arm, he could not help
back at her sister, and exchanging some further dialogue
same bantering description, as they all four ascended
parlour; where — for the young ladies happened, by go
tune, to be a little later than usual that night — the te
was at that moment being set out.

Mr. Pinch was not at home, so they had it all to the
and were very snug and talkative, Jonas sitting betwe
two sisters, and displaying his gallantry in that
ner which was peculiar to him. It was a hard thi
Pecksniff said, when tea was done, and cleared away,
so pleasant a little party, but having some important
examine in his own apartment, he must beg them
him for half an hour. With this apology he withdrew
a careless strain as he went. He had not been
utes, when Merry, who had been sitting in the w
from Jonas and her sister, burst into a half-co
and skipped towards the door.

"Hallo!" cried Jonas. "Don't go."

"Oh, I dare say!" rejoined Merry, looking back
very anxious I should stay, fright, ain't you?"

"Yes, I am," said Jonas. "Upon my word I
to speak to you." But as she left the room
he ran out after her, and brought her back, after a
gle in the passage which scandalised Miss Cherry very m

"Upon my word, Merry," urged that young lad
der at you! There are bounds even to absurdity, my

"Thank you, my sweet," said Merry, pursing up her rosy lips. "Much obliged to it for its advice. Oh! do leave me alone, you monster, do!" This entreaty was wrung from her by a new proceeding on the part of Mr. Jonas, who pulled her down, all breathless as she was, into a seat beside him on the sofa, having at the same time Miss Cherry upon the other side.

"Now," said Jonas, clasping the waist of each, "I have got both arms full, have n't I?"

"One of them will be black and blue to-morrow, if you don't let me go," cried the playful Merry.

"Ah! I don't mind *your* pinching," grinned Jonas, "a bit."

"Pinch him for me, Cherry, pray," said Mercy. "I never did hate anybody so much as I hate this creature, I declare!"

"No, no, don't say that," urged Jonas, "and don't pinch either, because I want to be serious. I say — Cousin Charity —"

"Well! what?" she answered sharply.

"I want to have some sober talk," said Jonas: "I want to prevent any mistakes, you know, and to put everything upon a pleasant understanding. That 's desirable and proper, ain't it?"

Neither of the sisters spoke a word. Mr. Jonas paused and cleared his throat, which was very dry.

"She 'll not believe what I 'm going to say, will she, cousin?" said Jonas, timidly squeezing Miss Charity.

"Really, Mr. Jonas, I don't know, until I hear what it is. It 's quite impossible!"

"Why, you see," said Jonas, "her way always being to make game of people, I know she 'll laugh, or pretend to — I know that beforehand. But you can tell her I 'm in earnest, cousin; can't you? You 'll confess you know, won't you? You 'll be honourable, I 'm sure," he added persuasively.

No answer. His throat seemed to grow hotter and hotter, and to be more and more difficult of control.

"You see, Cousin Charity," said Jonas, "nobody but you can tell her what pains I took to get into her company when you were both at the boarding-house in the city, because nobody 's so well aware of it, you know. Nobody else can tell her how hard I tried to get to know you better, in order that I might get to know her without seeming to wish it; can they? I always asked you about her, and said where had she gone, and when would she come, and how lively she was, and

hat; did n't I, cousin? I know you 'll tell her so, d
ve n't told her so already, and — and — I dare say you
ause I 'm sure you 're honourable, ain't you?"

Still not a word. The right arm of Mr. Jonas — the
sister sat upon his right — may have been sensible of
tumultuous throbbing which was not within itself; but no
else apprised him that his words had had the least effect.

"Even if you kept it to yourself, and have n't told
resumed Jonas, "it don't much matter, because you 'll
honest witness now; won't you? We 've been very
friends from the first; have n't we? and of course we sh
quite friends in future, and so I don't mind speaking
you a bit. Cousin Mercy, you 've heard what I 've bee
ing. She 'll confirm it, every word; she must. Wil
have me for your husband? Eh!"

As he released his hold of Charity, to put this question
better effect, she started up and hurried away to her own
marking her progress as she went by such a train of pas
and incoherent sound, as nothing but a slighted w
anger could produce.

"Let me go away. Let me go after her," said Mer
ing him off, and giving him to tell the tr
one sounding slap upon his outstretched face.

"Not till you say yes. You have n't told
have me for your husband?"

"No, I won't. I can't bear the sight of y
you so a hundred times. You are a fright.
thought you liked my sister best. We all th

"But that wasn't my fault," said Jonas.

"Yes, it was; you know it was."

"Any trick is fair in love," said Jonas. "She may
thought I liked her best, but you did n't."

"I did!"

"No, you did n't. You never could have th
her best, when you were by."

"There is no accounting for tastes," said Mercy. "
I did n't mean to say that. I don't know what I mean
me go to her."

"Say 'Yes,' and then I will."

"If I ever brought myself to say so, it should
I might hate and tease you all my life."

"That's as good," cried Jonas, "as saying it right out. It's a bargain, cousin. We're a pair, if ever there was one."

This gallant speech was succeeded by a confused noise of kissing and slapping; and then the fair but much dishevelled Merry broke away, and followed in the footsteps of her sister.

Now whether Mr. Pecksniff had been listening — which in one of his character appears impossible; or divined almost by inspiration what the matter was — which in a man of his sagacity is far more probable; or happened by sheer good fortune to find himself in exactly the right place, at precisely the right time — which, under the special guardianship in which he lived might very reasonably happen; it is quite certain that at the moment when the sisters came together in their own room, he appeared at the chamber door. And a marvellous contrast it was — they so heated, noisy, and vehement; he so calm, so self-possessed, so cool and full of peace, that not a hair upon his head was stirred.

"Children!" said Mr. Pecksniff, spreading out his hands in wonder, but not before he had shut the door, and set his back against it. "Girls! Daughters! What is this?"

"The wretch; the apostate; the false, mean, odious villain, has before my very face proposed to Mercy!" was his elder daughter's answer.

"Who has proposed to Mercy?" said Mr. Pecksniff.

"*He* has. That thing, Jonas, down stairs."

"Jonas proposed to Mercy?" said Mr. Pecksniff. "Ay, ay! Indeed!"

"Have you nothing else to say?" cried Charity. "Am I to be driven mad, papa? He has proposed to Mercy, not to me."

"Oh, fie! For shame!" said Mr. Pecksniff gravely. "Oh, for shame! Can the triumph of a sister move you to this terrible display, my child? Oh, really this is very sad! I am sorry; I am surprised and hurt to see you so. Mercy, my girl, bless you! See to her. Ah, envy, envy, what a passion you are!"

Uttering this apostrophe in a tone full of grief and lamentation, Mr. Pecksniff left the room (taking care to shut the door behind him) and walked down stairs into the parlour. There he found his intended son-in-law, whom he seized by both hands.

"Jonas!" cried Mr. Pecksniff. "Jonas! the dearest wish of my heart is now fulfilled!"

"Very well; I'm glad to hear it," said Jonas. "That'll do. I say, as it ain't the one you're so fond of, you must come down with another thousand, Pecksniff. You must make it up five. It's worth that to keep your treasure to yourself, you know. You get off very cheap that way, and haven't a sacrifice to make."

The grin with which he accompanied this, set off his other attractions to such unspeakable advantage, that even Mr. Pecksniff lost his presence of mind for the moment, and looked at the young man as if he were quite stupefied with wonder and admiration. But he quickly regained his composure, and was in the very act of changing the subject, when a hasty step was heard without, and Tom Pinch, in a state of great excitement, came darting into the room.

On seeing a stranger there, apparently engaged with Mr. Pecksniff in private conversation, Tom was very much abashed, though he still looked as if he had something of great importance to communicate, which would be a sufficient apology for his intrusion.

"Mr. Pinch," said Pecksniff, "this is hardly decent. You will excuse my saying that I think your conduct scarcely decent, Mr. Pinch."

"I beg your pardon, sir," replied Tom, "for not knocking at the door."

"Rather beg this gentleman's pardon, Mr. Pinch," said Pecksniff. "*I* know you; he does not. — My young man, Mr. Jonas."

The son-in-law that was to be gave him a slight nod — not actively disdainful or contemptuous, only passively; for he was in a good humour.

"Could I speak a word with you, sir, if you please?" said Tom. "It's rather pressing."

"It should be very pressing to justify this strange behaviour, Mr. Pinch," returned his master. "Excuse me for one moment, my dear friend. Now, sir, what is the reason of this rough intrusion?"

"I am very sorry, sir, I am sure," said Tom, standing, cap in hand, before his patron in the passage; "and I know it must have a very rude appearance — "

"It *has* a very rude appearance, Mr. Pinch."

"Yes, I feel that, sir; but the truth is, I was so surprised

to see them, and knew you would be too, that I ran home very fast indeed, and really had n't enough command over myself to know what I was doing very well. I was in the church just now, sir, touching the organ for my own amusement, when I happened to look round, and saw a gentleman and lady standing in the aisle listening. They seemed to be strangers, sir, as well as I could make out in the dusk, and I thought I did n't know them; so presently I left off, and said, would they walk up into the organ-loft, or take a seat? No, they said, they would n't do that; but they thanked me for the music they had heard — in fact," observed Tom blushing, "they said, 'Delicious music!' at least *she* did; and I am sure that was a greater pleasure and honour to me, than any compliment I could have had. I — I beg your pardon, sir," — he was all in a tremble, and dropped his hat for the second time, — "but I — I 'm rather flurried, and I fear I 've wandered from the point."

"If you will come back to it, Thomas," said Mr. Pecksniff, with an icy look, "I shall feel obliged."

"Yes, sir," returned Tom, "certainly. They had a posting carriage at the porch, sir, and had stopped to hear the organ, they said, and then they said — *she* said, I mean, 'I believe you live with Mr. Pecksniff, sir?' I said I had that honour, and I took the liberty, sir," added Tom, raising his eyes to his benefactor's face, "of saying, as I always will and must, with your permission, that I was under great obligations to you, and never could express my sense of them sufficiently."

"That," said Mr. Pecksniff, "was very, very wrong. Take your time, Mr. Pinch."

"Thank you, sir," cried Tom. "On that they asked me — she asked, I mean — 'Was n't there a bridle-road to Mr. Pecksniff's house — '"

Mr. Pecksniff suddenly became full of interest.

"'Without going by the Dragon?' When I said there was, and said how happy I should be to show it 'em, they sent the carriage on by the road, and came with me across the meadows. I left 'em at the turnstile to run forward and tell you they were coming, and they 'll be here, sir, in — in less than a minute's time, I should say," added Tom, fetching his breath with difficulty.

"Now who," said Mr. Pecksniff pondering, "who may these people be!"

my soul, sir!" cried Tom, "I meant to mention
urst; I thought I had. I knew them — her, I mea
ly. The gentleman who was ill at the Dragon, sir,
r, and the young lady who attended him."

n's teeth chattered in his head, and he positively
with amazement, at witnessing the extraordinary
duced on Mr. Pecksniff by these simple words. The d
losing the old man's favour almost as soon as they
onciled, through the mere fact of having Jonas in the ho
impossibility of dismissing Jonas, or shutting him up
ying him hand and foot, and putting him in the coal-co
without offending him beyond recall; the horrible discord
vailing in the establishment, and the impossibility of
ducing it to decent harmony, with Charity in loud hyste
Mercy in the utmost disorder, Jonas in the parlour, and
tin Chuzzlewit and his young charge upon the very door-st
the total hopelessness of being able to disguise or fea
explain this state of rampant confusion; the sudden accum
tion over his devoted head of every complicated perplexity
entanglement — for his extrication from which he [illegible]
to time, good fortune, chance, and his own plotting [illegible]
the entrapped architect with dismay, that if T[illegible]
been a Gorgon staring at Mr. Pecksniff, and Mr. [illegible]
could have been a Gorgon staring at Tom, they [illegible]
horrified each other half so much as in their own [illegible]
persons.

"Dear, dear!" cried Tom, "what have I done? [illegible]
would be a pleasant surprise, sir. I thought [illegible]
to know."

But at that moment a loud knocking was heard at the
door.

## CHAPTER XXI

MORE AMERICAN EXPERIENCES: MARTIN TAKES A PARTNER, AND MAKES A PURCHASE; SOME ACCOUNT OF EDEN AS IT APPEARED ON PAPER, ALSO OF THE BRITISH LION, ALSO OF THE KIND OF SYMPATHY PROFESSED AND ENTERTAINED BY THE WATER-TOAST ASSOCIATION OF UNITED SYMPATHISERS.

THE knocking at Mr. Pecksniff's door, though loud enough, bore no resemblance whatever to the noise of an American railway train at full speed. It may be well to begin the present chapter with this frank admission, lest the reader should imagine that the sounds now deafening this history's ears have any connection with the knocker on Mr. Pecksniff's door, or with the great amount of agitation pretty equally divided between that worthy man and Mr. Pinch, of which its strong performance was the cause.

Mr. Pecksniff's house is more than a thousand leagues away; and again this happy chronicle has Liberty and Moral Sensibility for its high companions. Again it breathes the blessed air of Independence; again it contemplates with pious awe that moral sense which renders unto Cæsar nothing that is his; again inhales that sacred atmosphere which was the life of him — oh noble patriot, with many followers! — who dreamed of Freedom in a slave's embrace, and waking sold her offspring and his own in public markets.

How the wheels clank and rattle, and the tram-road shakes, as the train rushes on! And now the engine yells, as it were lashed and tortured like a living labourer, and writhed in agony. A poor fancy; for steel and iron are of infinitely greater account, in this commonwealth, than flesh and blood. If the cunning work of man be urged beyond its power of endurance, it has within it the elements of its own revenge; whereas the wretched mechanism of the Divine Hand is dangerous with no such property, but may be tampered with, and crushed, and broken, at the driver's pleasure. Look at that

[illegible] shall cost a man more dollars in the way of p[illegible] and fine, and satisfaction of the outraged law, to defac[illegible] [illegible]onness that senseless mass of metal, than to take the li[illegible] twenty human creatures! Thus the stars wink upon t[illegible] [illegible]dy stripes; and Liberty pulls down her cap upon her ey[illegible] and owns Oppression in its vilest aspect, for her sister.

The engine-driver of the train whose noise awoke us to t[illegible] [illegible]sent chapter, was certainly troubled with no such reflecti[illegible] these; nor is it very probable that his mind was disturb[illegible] [illegible]y any reflections at all. He leaned with folded arms [illegible] crossed legs against the side of the carriage, smoking; a[illegible] except when he expressed, by a grunt as short as his pipe, [illegible] approval of some particularly dexterous aim on the part of [illegible] colleague, the fireman, who beguiled his leisure by throw[illegible] logs of wood from the tender at the numerous stray cattle [illegible] the line, he preserved a composure so immovable, and an ind[illegible] ference so complete, that if the locomotive had been a suckin[illegible] pig, he could not have been more perfectly indifferent to [illegible] doings. Notwithstanding the tranquil state of this officer, [illegible] his unbroken peace of mind, the train was proceeding [illegible] erable rapidity, and the rails being but poorly laid, [illegible] bumps it met with in its progress were neither slight [illegible]

There were three great caravans or cars attached [illegible] ladies' car, the gentlemen's car, and the car for [illegible] latter painted black, as an appropriate compliment [illegible] pany. Martin and Mark Tapley were in the first, [illegible] the most comfortable; and, being far from full, [illegible] gentlemen who, like them, were unblessed by the [illegible] ladies of their own. They were seated side by side, and [illegible] engaged in earnest conversation.

"And so, Mark," said Martin, looking at him with [illegible] anxious expression, "and so you are glad we have left N[illegible] York far behind us, are you?"

"Yes, sir," said Mark. "I am. Precious glad."

"Were you not 'jolly' there?" asked Martin.

"On the contrary, sir," returned Mark. "The [illegible] week as ever I spent in my life was that there week at Pa[illegible] kins's."

"What do you think of our prospects?" inquired Mar[illegible] with an air that plainly said he had avoided the question [illegible] some time.

"Uncommon bright, sir," returned Mark. "Impossible for a place to have a better name, sir, than the Walley of Eden. No man could n't think of settling in a better place than the Walley of Eden. And I 'm told," added Mark after a pause, "as there 's lots of serpents there, so we shall come out quite complete and reg'lar."

So far from dwelling upon this agreeable piece of information with the least dismay, Mark's face grew radiant as he called it to mind — so very radiant, that a stranger might have supposed he had all his life been yearning for the society of serpents, and now hailed with delight the approaching consummation of his fondest wishes.

"Who told you that?" asked Martin sternly.

"A military officer," said Mark.

"Confound you for a ridiculous fellow!" cried Martin, laughing heartily in spite of himself. "What military officer? you know they spring up in every field — "

"As thick as scarecrows in England, sir," interposed Mark, "which is a sort of militia themselves, being entirely coat and waistcoat, with a stick inside. Ha, ha! — Don't mind me, sir; it 's my way sometimes. I can't help being jolly. Why, it was one of them inwading conquerors at Pawkins's as told me. 'Am I rightly informed,' he says — not exactly through his nose, but as if he 'd got a stoppage in it very high up — 'that you 're a going to the Walley of Eden?' 'I heard some talk on it,' I told him. 'Oh!' says he, 'if you should ever happen to go to bed there — you *may*, you know,' he says, 'in course of time as civilisation progresses — don't forget to take an axe with you.' I looks at him tolerable hard. 'Fleas?' says I. 'And more,' says he. 'Wampires?' says I. 'And more,' says he. 'Mosquitoes, perhaps?' says I. 'And more,' says he. 'What more?' says I. 'Snakes more,' says he — 'rattlesnakes. You 're right to a certain extent, stranger; there air some catawampous chawers in the small way too, as graze upon a human pretty strong; but don't mind *them* — they 're company. It 's snakes,' he says, 'as you 'll object to: and whenever you wake and see one in a upright poster on your bed,' he says, 'like a corkscrew with the handle off a kittin' on its bottom ring, cut him down, for he means venom.'"

"Why did n't you tell me this before!" cried Martin, with

sion of face which set off the cheerfulness of M
age to great advantage.

"I never thought on it, sir," said Mark. "It come in at
, and went out at the other. But Lord love us, he wa
another Company I dare say, and only made up the
at we might go to his Eden, and not the opposition one."

"There 's some probability in that," observed Martin.
an honestly say that I hope so, with all my heart."

"I 've not a doubt about it, sir," returned Mark, who,
of the inspiriting influence of the anecdote upon himself,
for the moment forgotten its probable effect upon his ma
"anyhow, we must live, you know, sir."

"Live!" cried Martin. "Yes, it 's easy to say live; b
we should happen not to wake when rattlesnakes are ma
corkscrews of themselves upon our beds, it may not be so
to do it."

"And that 's a fact," said a voice so close in his ear th
tickled him. "That 's dreadful true."

Martin looked round, and found that a gentleman, o
seat behind, had thrust his head between him [illegible]
and sat with his chin resting on the back [illegible]
bench, entertaining himself with their [illegible]
as languid and listless in his looks as [illegible]
they had seen; his cheeks were so hollow that [illegible]
always sucking them in; and the sun had [illegible]
wholesome red or brown, but dirty [illegible] He [illegible]
dark eyes, which he kept half closed [illegible]
corners, and even then with a glance that [illegible]
you won't overreach me; you want to, [illegible]
arms [illegible] on his knees as he [illegible]
palm of his left hand, as English [illegible]
cheese, he had a cake of tobacco, in his right a [illegible]
He struck into the dialogue with as little [illegible]
been specially called in, days before, to hear the [illegible]
both sides, and favour them with his opinion [illegible]
[illegible] for the possibility of their [illegible]
the [illegible] or interference in their [illegible]
affairs, than if he had been a bear or a [illegible]

"[illegible]," he [illegible], nodding [illegible] Ma
[illegible] and foreigner. "[illegible]
[illegible] all manner of [illegible]."

Martin could not help frowning for a moment, as if he were disposed to insinuate that the gentleman had unconsciously "darned" himself. But remembering the wisdom of doing at Rome as Romans do, he smiled with the pleasantest expression he could assume upon so short a notice.

Their new friend said no more just then, being busily employed in cutting a quid or plug from his cake of tobacco, and whistling softly to himself the while. When he had shaped it to his liking, he took out his old plug, and deposited the same on the back of the seat between Mark and Martin, while he thrust the new one into the hollow of his cheek, where it looked like a large walnut, or tolerable pippin. Finding it quite satisfactory, he struck the point of his knife into the old plug, and holding it out for their inspection, remarked with the air of a man who had not lived in vain, that it was "used up considerable." Then he tossed it away; put his knife into one pocket and his tobacco into another; rested his chin upon the rail as before; and approving of the pattern on Martin's waistcoat, reached out his hand to feel the texture of that garment.

"What do you call this now?" he asked.

"Upon my word," said Martin, "I don't know what it's called."

"It 'll cost a dollar or more a yard, I reckon?"

"I really don't know."

"In my country," said the gentleman, "we know the cost of our own prŏ-dūce."

Martin not discussing the question, there was a pause.

"Well!" resumed their new friend, after staring at them intently during the whole interval of silence, "how's the unnat'ral old parent by this time?"

Mr. Tapley regarding this inquiry as only another version of the impertinent English question — "How's your mother?" would have resented it instantly, but for Martin's prompt interposition.

"You mean the old country?" he said.

"Ah!" was the reply. "How's she! Progressing back-'ards, I expect, as usual? Well! How's Queen Victoria?"

"In good health, I believe," said Martin.

"Queen Victoria won't shake in her royal shoes at all, when she hears to-morrow named," observed the stranger. "No."

t I am aware of. Why should she?"

"She won't be taken with a cold chill, when she rea

at is being done in these diggings," said the stra

"

"No," said Martin. "I think I could take my oath

that."

The strange gentleman looked at him as if in pity for

norance or prejudice, and said:—

"Well, sir, I tell you this—there ain't a en-gine with

iler bust, in God A'mighty's free U-nited States, so f

and nipped, and frizzled to a most e-tarnal smash, as that yo

critter, in her luxurious lo-cation in the Tower of London,

be when she reads the next double-extra Watertoast Gazette

Several other gentlemen had left their seats and gath

round during the foregoing dialogue. They were highly

lighted with this speech. One very lank gentleman, in a l

limp white cravat, a long white waistcoat, and a black g

coat, who seemed to be in authority among them, felt ca

upon to acknowledge it.

"Hem! Mr. La Fayette Kettle," he said, taking [illegible]

hat.

There was a grave murmur of "Hush!"

"Mr. La Fayette Kettle! Sir!"

Mr. Kettle bowed.

"In the name of this company, sir, and in the name [illegible] common country, and in the name of that righteous [illegible] holy sympathy in which we are engaged, I thank [illegible] thank you, sir, in the name of the Watertoast S[illegible] and I thank you, sir, in the name of the Watertoast [illegible] and I thank you, sir, in the name of the star-spangled [illegible] of the Great United States, for your eloquent and [illegible] exposition. And if, sir," said the speaker, poking [illegible] with the handle of his umbrella to bespeak his atten[illegible] he was listening to a whisper from Mark, "if, sir, in [illegible] place, and at such a time, I might venture to [illegible] sentiment, glancing however slantin'dicularly [illegible] at the [illegible] ject in hand, I would say, sir, may the British Li[illegible] [illegible] tal [illegible] by the noble bill of the American Ea[illegible] [illegible] to play upon the Irish Harp and the S[illegible] F[illegible] that [illegible] which is breathed in every empty shell that [illegible] upon the shores of green Columbia!"

Here the lank gentleman sat down again, amidst a great sensation; and every one looked very grave.

"General Choke," said Mr. La Fayette Kettle, "you warm my heart; sir, you warm my heart. But the British Lion is not unrepresented here, sir; and I should be glad to hear his answer to those remarks."

"Upon my word," cried Martin laughing, "since you do me the honour to consider me his representative, I have only to say that I never heard of Queen Victoria reading the What's-his-name Gazette, and that I should scarcely think it probable."

General Choke smiled upon the rest, and said, in patient and benignant explanation: —

"It is sent to her, sir. It is sent to her. Per mail."

"But if it is addressed to the Tower of London, it would hardly come to hand, I fear," returned Martin: "for she don't live there."

"The Queen of England, gentlemen," observed Mr. Tapley, affecting the greatest politeness, and regarding them with an immovable face, "usually lives in the Mint to take care of the money. She *has* lodgings, in virtue of her office, with the Lord Mayor at the Mansion House; but don't often occupy them, in consequence of the parlour chimney smoking."

"Mark," said Martin, "I shall be very much obliged to you if you 'll have the goodness not to interfere with preposterous statements, however jocose they may appear to you. I was merely remarking, gentlemen — though it 's a point of very little import — that the Queen of England does not happen to live in the Tower of London."

"General!" cried Mr. La Fayette Kettle. "You hear?"

"General!" echoed several others. "General!"

"Hush! Pray, silence!" said General Choke, holding up his hand, and speaking with a patient and complacent benevolence that was quite touching. "I have always remarked it as a very extraordinary circumstance, which I impute to the natur' of British Institutions and their tendency to suppress that popular inquiry and information which air so widely diffused even in the trackless forests of this vast Continent of the Western Ocean; that the knowledge of Britishers themselves on such points is not to be compared with that possessed by our intelligent and locomotive citizens. This is interesting and confirms my observation. When you say, sir," he contin-

...ing Martin, "that your Queen does not reside a
...wer of London, you fall into an error, not uncommon a
...untrymen, even when their abilities and moral elements
...h as to command respect. But, sir, you are wrong,
...s live there —"

...en she is at the Court of Saint James's;" interposed

...en she is at the Court of Saint James's, of course," ...d the General, in the same benignant way; "for if he ...n was in Windsor Pavilion it couldn't be in London at ...me time. Your Tower of London, sir," pursued the ...al, smiling with a mild consciousness of his knowledge, ...t'rally your royal residence. Being located in the immediate neighbourhood of your Parks, your Drives, your Triumphal Arches, your Opera, and your Royal Almacks, it naturally suggests itself as the place for holding a luxurious and thoughtless court. And, consequently," said the General, "consequently, the court is held there."

"Have you been in England?" asked Martin.

"In print I have, sir," said the General, "but ... We are a reading people here, sir. You will meet with ... information among us that will surprise you, sir."

"I have not the least doubt of it," returned Martin; ... here he was interrupted by Mr. La Fayette Kettle, who whispered in his ear, —

"You know General Choke?"

"No," returned Martin, in the same tone.

"You know what he is considered?"

"One of the most remarkable men in the country," said Martin, at a venture.

"That's a fact," rejoined Kettle. "I was sure you must have heard of him."

"I think," said Martin, addressing himself to the General again, "that I have the pleasure of being the bearer of a letter of introduction to you, sir. From Mr. Bevan, of Massachusetts," he added, giving it to him.

The General took it and read it attentively, now and then stopping to glance at the two strangers. When he had finished the letter, he came over to Martin, sat down by him, and shook hands.

"Well!" he said, "and you think of settling in Eden?"

"Subject to your opinion, and the agent's advice," replied Martin. "I am told there is nothing to be done in the old towns."

"I can introduce you to the agent, sir," said the General. "I know him. In fact, I am a member of the Eden Land Corporation myself."

This was serious news to Martin, for his friend had laid great stress upon the General's having no connection, as he thought, with any land company, and therefore being likely to give him disinterested advice. The General explained that he had joined the Corporation only a few weeks ago, and that no communication had passed between himself and Mr. Bevan since.

"We have very little to venture," said Martin anxiously — "only a few pounds — but it is our all. Now, do you think that for one of my profession, this would be a speculation with any hope or chance in it?"

"Well!" observed the General gravely, "if there was n't any hope or chance in the speculation, it would n't have engaged my dollars, I opinionate."

"I don't mean for the sellers," said Martin. "For the buyers — for the buyers!"

"For the buyers, sir?" observed the General, in a most impressive manner. "Well! you come from an old country; from a country, sir, that has piled up golden calves as high as Babel, and worshipped 'em for ages. We are a new country, sir; man is in a more primeval state here, sir; we have not the excuse of having lapsed in the slow course of time into degenerate practices; we have no false gods; man, sir, here, is man in all his dignity. We fought for that or nothing. Here am I, sir," said the General, setting up his umbrella to represent himself; and a villanous-looking umbrella it was; a very bad counter to stand for the sterling coin of his benevolence: "here am I with grey hairs, sir, and a moral sense. Would I, with my principles, invest capital in this speculation if I did n't think it full of hopes and chances for my brother man?"

Martin tried to look convinced, but he thought of New York, and found it difficult.

"What are the Great United States for, sir," pursued the General, "if not for the regeneration of man? But it is nat'ral in you to make such an enquerry, for you come from England, and you do not know my country."

Then you think," said Martin, "that allowing for
rdships we are prepared to undergo, there is a reasonab
Heaven knows we don't expect much — a reasonable op
in this place?"

"A reasonable opening in Eden, sir! But see the agent
the agent; see the maps, and plans, sir; and conclude to g
ay, according to the natur' of the settlement. Eden ha
need to go a begging yet, sir," remarked the General.

"It is an awful lovely place, sure-ly. And frightful w
me, likewise!" said Mr. Kettle, who had made hims
arty to this conversation as a matter of course.

Martin felt that to dispute such testimony, for no b
son than because he had his secret misgivings on the
ject, would be ungentlemanly and indecent. So he tha
the General for his promise to put him in personal commu
tion with the agent; and "concluded" to see that officer
morning. He then begged the General to inform him wh
Watertoast Sympathisers were, of whom he had spoke
addressing Mr. La Fayette Kettle, and on what grou
they bestowed their Sympathy. To which the Genera
ing very serious, made answer, that he might f[illegible]
himself on those points to-morrow by attending a Great M
ing of the Body, which would then be held at the to
which they were travelling; "over which, sir," said the G
eral, "my fellow-citizens have called on me to preside."

They came to their journey's end late in the eve
Close to the railway was an immense white edifice, [illegible]
ugly hospital, on which was painted "NATIONAL H
There was a wooden gallery or verandah in front, in wh
was rather startling, when the train stopped, to behold a
many pairs of boots and shoes, and the smoke of a great m
cigars, but no other evidences of human habitation. By
degrees, however, some heads and shoulders appeared, and
necting themselves with the boots and shoes, led to the
ery that certain gentlemen boarders, who had a fancy for
their heels where the gentlemen boarders in other [illegible]
usually put their heads, were enjoying themselves after t
own manner in the cool of the evening.

There was a great bar-room in this hotel, and a great
room in which the general table was being set out for
There were interminable whitewashed staircases, long w

washed galleries up stairs and down stairs, scores of little whitewashed bedrooms, and a four-sided verandah to every story in the house, which formed a large brick square with an uncomfortable court-yard in the centre, where some clothes were drying. Here and there, some yawning gentlemen lounged up and down with their hands in their pockets; but within the house and without, wherever half a dozen people were collected together, there, in their looks, dress, morals, manners, habits, intellect, and conversation, were Mr. Jefferson Brick, Colonel Diver, Major Pawkins, General Choke and Mr. La Fayette Kettle, over, and over, and over again. They did the same things; said the same things; judged all subjects by, and reduced all subjects to, the same standard. Observing how they lived, and how they were always in the enchanting company of each other, Martin even began to comprehend their being the social, cheerful, winning, airy men they were.

At the sounding of a dismal gong, this pleasant company went trooping down from all parts of the house to the public room, while from the neighbouring stores other guests came flocking in, in shoals; for half the town, married folks as well as single, resided at the National Hotel. Tea, coffee, dried meats, tongue, ham, pickles, cake, toast, preserves, and bread and butter were swallowed with the usual ravaging speed; and then, as before, the company dropped off by degrees, and lounged away to the desk, the counter, or the bar-room. The ladies had a smaller ordinary of their own, to which their husbands and brothers were admitted if they chose; and in all other respects they enjoyed themselves as at Pawkins's.

"Now Mark, my good fellow," said Martin, closing the door of his little chamber, "we must hold a solemn council, for our fate is decided to-morrow morning. You are determined to invest these savings of yours in the common stock, are you?"

"If I had n't been determined to make that wentur, sir," answered Mr. Tapley, "I should n't have come."

"How much is there here, did you say?" asked Martin, holding up a little bag.

"Thirty-seven pound ten and sixpence. The Savings Bank said so, at least. I never counted it. But *they* know, bless you," said Mark, with a shake of the head expressive of his unbounded confidence in the wisdom and arithmetic of those Institutions.

...ey we brought with us," said Martin, "is redu... w shillings less than eight pounds."

Tapley smiled, and looked all manner of ways, that ... not be supposed to attach any importance to this fact.

"Upon the ring — *her* ring, Mark," said Martin, look... fully at his empty finger —

"Ah!" sighed Mr. Tapley. "Beg your pardon, sir."

"— We raised, in English money, fourteen pounds. So, ... h that, your share of the stock is still very much the la... the two, you see. Now Mark," said Martin, in his ... ay, just as he might have spoken to Tom Pinch, "I h... thought of a means of making this up to you, — more t... aking it up to you, I hope, — and very materially elevat... your prospects in life."

"Oh! don't talk of that, you know, sir," returned Ma... "I don't want no elevating, sir. I'm all right enough, ... *I am.*"

"No, but hear me," said Martin, "because this is very ... portant to you, and a great satisfaction to me. Mark, ... shall be a partner in the business, an equal partner ... self. I will put in, as my additional capital, ... knowledge and ability, and half the annual profits, ... it is carried on, shall be yours."

Poor Martin! for ever building castles in the air ... in his very selfishness, forgetful of all but ... hopes and sanguine plans. Swelling, at that instant ... consciousness of patronising and most munificently ... Mark!

"I don't know, sir," Mark rejoined, much ... his custom was, though from a very different cause than Ma... supposed, "what I can say to this, in the way of ... you. I'll stand by you, sir, to the best of my ability, ... the last. That's all."

"We quite understand each other, my good fellow," ... Martin, rising in self-approval and condescension. "We ... no longer master and servant, but friends and partners ... mutually gratified. If we determine on Eden, the ... shall be commenced as soon as we get there. ... name," said Martin, who never hammered upon an ... was not red hot, "under the name of Chuzzlewit and Tapley."

"Lord love you, sir," cried Mark, "don't have my name

it. I ain't acquainted with the business, sir. I must be Co., I must. I 've often thought," he added in a low voice, "as I should like to know a Co., but I little thought as ever I should live to be one."

"You shall have your own way, Mark."

"Thank'ee, sir. If any country gentleman thereabouts, in the public way, or otherwise, wanted such a thing as a skittle-ground made, I could take that part of the bis'ness, sir."

"Against any architect in the States," said Martin. "Get a couple of sherry-cobblers, Mark, and we 'll drink success to the firm."

Either he forgot already (and often afterwards) that they were no longer master and servant, or considered this kind of duty to be among the legitimate functions of the Co. But Mark obeyed with his usual alacrity; and before they parted for the night, it was agreed between them that they should go together to the agent's in the morning, but that Martin should decide the Eden question on his own sound judgment. And Mark made no merit, even to himself in his jollity, of this concession; perfectly well knowing that the matter would come to that in the end, any way.

The General was one of the party at the public table next day, and after breakfast suggested that they should wait upon the agent without loss of time. They, desiring nothing more, agreed; so off they all four started for the office of the Eden Settlement, which was almost within rifle-shot of the National Hotel.

It was a small place — something like a turnpike. But a great deal of land may be got into a dice-box, and why may not a whole territory be bargained for in a shed? It was but a temporary office too; for the Edeners were "going" to build a superb establishment for the transaction of their business, and had already got so far as to mark out the site, which is a great way in America. The office-door was wide open, and in the doorway was the agent; no doubt a tremendous fellow to get through his work, for he seemed to have no arrears, but was swinging backwards and forwards in a rocking-chair, with one of his legs planted high up against the door-post, and the other doubled up under him, as if he were hatching his foot.

He was a gaunt man in a huge straw hat, and a coat of green stuff. The weather being hot, he had no cravat, and wore his

wide open; so that every time he spoke someth
seen to twitch and jerk up in his throat, like the li
mers in a harpsichord when the notes are struck. Perh
as the Truth feebly endeavouring to leap to his lips.
it never reached them.

Two grey eyes lurked deep within this agent's head, but
them had no sight in it, and stood stock still. With
e of his face he seemed to listen to what the other side
ng. Thus each profile had a distinct expression; and w
movable side was most in action, the rigid one was in
dest state of watchfulness. It was like turning the
ide out, to pass to that view of his features in his lived
d, and see how calculating and intent they were.

Each long black hair upon his head hung down as straight
any plummet line, but rumpled tufts were on the arches of
eyes, as if the crow whose foot was deeply printed in the
ners had pecked and torn them in a savage recognition of
kindred nature as a bird of prey.

Such was the man whom they now approached, and wh
the General saluted by the name of Scadder.

"Well, Gen'ral," he returned, "and how are you?"

"Active and spry, sir, in my country's service and
sympathetic cause. Two gentlemen on business, Mr. Sca
der."

He shook hands with each of them — nothing is done
America without shaking hands — then went on rocking.

"I think I know what bis'ness you have brought the
strangers here upon, then, Gen'ral?"

"Well, sir. I expect you may."

"You air a tongue-y person, Gen'ral. For you talk
much, and that's a fact," said Scadder. "You speak a lar
ing well in public, but you did n't ought to go ahead so fast
private. Now!"

"If I can realise your meaning, ride me on a rail!" retur
the General, after pausing for consideration.

"You know we did n't wish to sell the lots off right aw
to any loafer as might bid," said Scadder, "but had conclu
to reserve 'em for Aristocrats of Natur'. Yes!"

"And they are here, sir!" cried the General with warm
"They are here, sir!"

"If they air here," returned the agent, in reproachful

cents, "that's enough. But you didn't ought to have your dander ris with *me*, Gen'ral."

The General whispered Martin that Scadder was the honestest fellow in the world, and that he wouldn't have given him offence designedly for ten thousand dollars.

"I do my duty; and I raise the dander of my feller critters as I wish to serve," said Scadder in a low voice, looking down the road and rocking still. "They rile up rough, along of my objecting to their selling Eden off too cheap. That's human natur'! Well!"

"Mr. Scadder," said the General, assuming his oratorical deportment. "Sir! Here is my hand, and here my heart. I esteem you, sir, and ask your pardon. These gentlemen air friends of mine, or I would not have brought 'em here, sir, being well aware, sir, that the lots at present go entirely too cheap. But these air friends, sir; these air partick'ler friends."

Mr. Scadder was so satisfied by this explanation, that he shook the General warmly by the hand, and got out of the rocking-chair to do it. He then invited the General's particular friends to accompany him into the office. As to the General, he observed, with his usual benevolence, that being one of the company, he wouldn't interfere in the transaction on any account; so he appropriated the rocking-chair to himself, and looked at the prospect, like a good Samaritan waiting for a traveller.

"Heyday!" cried Martin, as his eye rested on a great plan which occupied one whole side of the office. Indeed, the office had little else in it, but some geological and botanical specimens, one or two rusty ledgers, a homely desk, and a stool. "Heyday! what's that?"

"That's Eden," said Scadder, picking his teeth with a sort of young bayonet that flew out of his knife when he touched a spring.

"Why, I had no idea it was a city."

"Hadn't you? Oh, it's a city."

A flourishing city, too! An architectural city! There were banks, churches, cathedrals, market-places, factories, hotels, stores, mansions, wharves; an exchange, a theatre; public buildings of all kinds, down to the office of the Eden Stinger, a daily journal — all faithfully depicted in the view before them.

..ne! It 's really a most important place!" [illegible] Martin, turning round.

"Oh! it 's very important," observed the agent.

"But I am afraid," said Martin, glancing again at the [illegible] [Publ]ic Buildings, "that there 's nothing left for me to do."

"Well! it ain't all built," replied the agent. "Not qu[ite]." This was a great relief.

"The market-place, now," said Martin. "Is that built?"

"That!" said the agent, sticking his toothpick into [the] weathercock on the top. "Let me see. No; that [ain't] built."

"Rather a good job to begin with — eh, Mark?" whi[spered Mar]tin, nudging him with his elbow.

Mark, who, with a very stolid countenance had been ey[eing] the plan and the agent by turns, merely rejoined "Uncommon."

A dead silence ensued; Mr. Scadder in some short [illegible] or vacations of his toothpick whistled a few bars of Ya[nkee] Doodle, and blew the dust off the roof of the Theatre.

"I suppose," said Martin, feigning to look more narr[owly at] the plan, but showing by his tremulous voice [illegible] pended, in his mind, upon the answer. "I suppose [illegible] several architects there?"

"There ain't a single one," said Scadder.

"Mark," whispered Martin, pulling him by the sleeve, "[do] you hear that? But whose work is all this before us [illegible]" he asked aloud.

"The soil being very fruitful, public buildings grow [spon]taneous, perhaps," said Mark.

He was on the agent's dark side as he said [illegible] Scadder instantly changed his place, and brought his [illegible] eye to bear upon him.

"Feel of my hands, young man," he said.

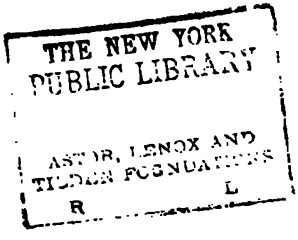
"What for?" asked Mark, declining.

"Are they dirty, or are they clean, sir?" said Scadder, [illegible]

In a [illegible] point of view they were decidedly dirty. [illegible] that Mr. Scadder offered them for exam[ination] [illegible] as emblems of his moral character [illegible] hastened [illegible] them pure as the driven [snow].

"[illegible] Mark," he said, with some irritation, "that will [illegible] remarks of that nature, which, however [illegible]

EDEN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less and well-intentioned, are quite out of place, and cannot be expected to be very agreeable to strangers. I am quite surprised."

"The Co. 's a putting his foot in it already," thought Mark. "He must be a sleeping partner — fast asleep and snoring — Co. must; *I* see."

Mr. Scadder said nothing, but he set his back against the plan, and thrust his toothpick into the desk some twenty times; looking at Mark all the while as if he were stabbing him in effigy.

"You have n't said whose work it is," Martin ventured to observe, at length, in a tone of mild propitiation.

"Well, never mind whose work it is, or is n't," said the agent sulkily. "No matter how it did eventuate. P'raps he cleared off, handsome, with a heap of dollars; p'raps he was n't worth a cent. P'raps he was a loafin' rowdy; p'raps a ring-tailed roarer. Now!"

"All your doing, Mark!" said Martin.

"P'raps," pursued the agent, "them ain't plants of Eden's raising. No! P'raps that desk and stool ain't made from Eden lumber. No! P'raps no end of squatters ain't gone out there. No! P'raps there ain't no such location in the territoary of the Great U-nited States. Oh no!"

"I hope you 're satisfied with the success of your joke, Mark," said Martin.

But here, at a most opportune and happy time, the General interposed, and called out to Scadder from the doorway to give his friends the particulars of that little lot of fifty acres with the house upon it: which, having belonged to the company formerly, had lately lapsed again into their hands.

"You air a deal too open-handed, Gen'ral," was the answer. "It is a lot as should be rose in price. It is."

He grumblingly opened his books notwithstanding, and always keeping his bright side towards Mark, no matter at what amount of inconvenience to himself, displayed a certain leaf for their perusal. Martin read it greedily, and then inquired: —

"Now where upon the plan may this place be?"

"Upon the plan?" said Scadder.

"Yes."

He turned towards it, and reflected for a short time, as if, having been put upon his mettle, he was resolved to be partic-

to the very minutest hair's breadth of a shade. At long
er wheeling his toothpick slowly round and round in the
if it were a carrier pigeon just thrown up, he suddenly m
dart at the drawing, and pierced the very centre of the m
wharf through and through.

"There!" he said, leaving his knife quivering in the w
"that's where it is!"

Martin glanced with sparkling eyes upon his Co., and his
aw that the thing was done.

The bargain was not concluded as easily as might have b
expected though, for Scadder was caustic and ill-humoured,
cast much unnecessary opposition in the way; at one time
questing them to think of it, and call again in a week or a f
night; at another, predicting that they would n't like it;
another, offering to retract and let them off, and mutter
strong imprecations upon the folly of the General. But
whole of the astoundingly small sum total of purchase-mone
it was only one hundred and fifty dollars, or something m
than thirty pounds of the capital brought by Co. into the a
tectural concern was ultimately paid down and Mar
was two inches nearer the roof of the little w
the consciousness of being a landed proprietor in the
city of Eden.

"If it should n't happen to fit," said Scadder, as
Martin the necessary credentials on receipt of his m
blame me."

"No, no," he replied merrily. "We'll not
General, are you going?"

"I am at your service, sir, and I wish you," said the
eral, giving him his hand with grave cordiality,
possession. You air now, sir, a denizen of the
and highly civilised dominion that has ever graced
a dominion, sir, where man is bound to man in
of equal love and truth. May you, sir, be worthy
adopted country!"

Martin thanked him, and took leave of Mr. Scadder
had resumed his post in the rocking-chair, immediately
General, rising from it, and was once more swinging away
if he had never been disturbed. Mark looked
times as they went down the road towards the Nat
but now his blighted profile was towards them, and

attentive thoughtfulness was written on it. Strangely different to the other side! He was not a man much given to laughing, and never laughed outright; but every line in the print of the crow's foot, and every little wiry vein in that division of his head, was wrinkled up into a grin! The compound figure of Death and the Lady at the top of the old ballad was not divided with a greater nicety, and had n't halves more monstrously unlike each other, than the two profiles of Zephaniah Scadder.

The General posted along at a great rate, for the clock was on the stroke of twelve; and at that hour precisely, the Great Meeting of the Watertoast Sympathisers was to be holden in the public room of the National Hotel. Being very curious to witness the demonstration, and know what it was all about, Martin kept close to the General: and, keeping closer than ever when they entered the Hall, got by that means upon a little platform of tables at the upper end; where an arm-chair was set for the General, and Mr. La Fayette Kettle, as secretary, was making a great display of some foolscap documents — Screamers, no doubt.

"Well, sir!" he said, as he shook hands with Martin, "here is a spectacle calc'lated to make the British Lion put his tail between his legs, and howl with anguish, I expect!"

Martin certainly thought it possible that the British Lion might have been rather out of his element in that Ark, but he kept the idea to himself. The General was then voted to the chair, on the motion of a pallid lad of the Jefferson Brick school; who forthwith set in for a high-spiced speech, with a good deal about hearths and homes in it, and unriveting the chains of Tyranny.

Oh, but it was a clincher for the British Lion, it was! The indignation of the glowing young Columbian knew no bounds. If he could only have been one of his own forefathers, he said, would n't he have peppered that same Lion, and been to him as another Brute Tamer with a wire whip, teaching him lessons not easily forgotten. "Lion! (cried that young Columbian) where is he? Who is he? What is he? Show him to me. Let me have him here. Here!" said the young Columbian, in a wrestling attitude, "upon this sacred altar. Here!" cried the young Columbian, idealising the dining-table, "upon ancestral ashes, cemented with the glorious blood poured out like water on our native plains of Chickabiddy Lick! Bring forth

cheers arose as might have shaken the hands upon Guards' clock, and changed the very mean time of England's capital.

"Who is that?" Marten telegraphed [illegible]

The Secretary wrote something very [illegible] paper, twisted it up, and had it passed [illegible] hand. It was an improvement on the [illegible] have as remarkable a man as any in our country.

This young Columbian was succeeded by [illegible] who drew down storms of [illegible] their great [illegible] poetry [illegible] details, [illegible] what the [illegible] sympathies [illegible] wherefore they were [illegible] Miss Marten [illegible] time [illegible] in the dark [illegible] of light [illegible] Secretary, [illegible] what [illegible] [illegible]

"'SIR, —

"'I address you on behalf of the Watertoast Association of United Sympathisers. It is founded, sir, in the great republic of America! and now holds its breath, and swells the blue veins in its forehead nigh to bursting, as it watches, sir, with feverish intensity and sympathetic ardour, your noble efforts in the cause of Freedom — '"

At the name of Freedom, and at every repetition of that name, all the Sympathisers roared aloud; cheering with nine times nine, and nine times over.

"'— In Freedom's name, sir — holy Freedom — I address you. In Freedom's name, I send herewith a contribution to the funds of your Society. In Freedom's name, sir, I advert with indignation and disgust to that accursed animal, with gore-stained whiskers, whose rampant cruelty and fiery lust have ever been a scourge, a torment to the world. The naked visitors to Crusoe's Island, sir, the flying wives of Peter Wilkins, the fruit-smeared children of the tangled bush, — nay, even the men of large stature, anciently bred in the mining districts of Cornwall, — alike bear witness to its savage nature. Where, sir, are the Cormorans, the Blunderbores, the Great Feefofums, named in History? all, all, exterminated by its destroying hand.

"'I allude, sir, to the British Lion.

"'Devoted, mind and body, heart and soul, to Freedom, sir — to Freedom, blessed solace to the snail upon the cellar-door, the oyster in his pearly bed, the still mite in his home of cheese, the very winkle of your country in his shelly lair — in her unsullied name, we offer you our sympathy. Oh, sir, in this our cherished and our happy land, her fires burn bright and clear and smokeless; once lighted up in yours, the lion shall be roasted whole.

"'I am, sir, in Freedom's name,

"'Your affectionate friend and faithful Sympathiser,

"'CYRUS CHOKE,

"'General, U. S. M.'"

It happened that just as the General began to read this letter the railroad train arrived, bringing a new mail from England; and a packet had been handed in to the Secretary, which during its perusal and the frequent cheerings in homage

...reedom, he had opened. Now, its contents disturbed h
much, and the moment the General sat down, he hur
side, and placed in his hand a letter and several pri
ts from English newspapers; to which, in a state of i
excitement, he called his immediate attention.

General, being greatly heated by his own compass
a fit state to receive any inflammable influence; ha
d no sooner possessed himself of the contents of those d
ents than a change came over his face, involving such a h
nount of choler and passion that the noisy concourse w
dlent in a moment, in very wonder at the sight of him.

"My friends!" cried the General, rising; "my friends
w-citizens, we have been mistaken in this man."

"In what man?" was the cry.

"In this," panted the General, holding up the letter he
**read aloud a few minutes before. "I find that he has h
and is, the advocate — consistent in it always, too — of Ny
emancipation!"**

If anything beneath the sky be real, these S... would have pistolled, stabbed — in some way ... by coward hands and murderous violence, ... among them at that time. The most ... countrymen would not have wagered the ... ever peril — one dinghall straw upon the life ... such a strait. They tore the letter, cast the ... air, trod down the pieces as they fell, and yelled, ... and hissed, till they could cry no longer.

"I shall move," said the General, when he ... self heard, "that the Watertoast Association ... this be immediately dissolved!"

Down with it! Away with it! Don't hear ... records! Pull the room down! Put it out of ...

"But, my fellow-countrymen!" said the Gen... tribulations. We have funds. What is to be ... funds?"

It was hastily resolved that a piece of plate ... sented to a certain constitutional Judge, ... from the bench the terrible principle that it was ... white man to murder any black man; and that ... of plate, of similar value, should be presented to ... Patriot, who had declared from his high place in the ...

ture that he and his friends would hang, without trial, any Abolitionist who might pay them a visit. For the surplus, it was agreed that it should be devoted to aiding the enforcement of those free and equal laws, which render it incalculably more criminal and dangerous to teach a negro to read and write than to roast him alive in a public city. These points adjusted, the meeting broke up in great disorder; and there was an end of the Watertoast Sympathy.

As Martin ascended to his bedroom, his eye was attracted by the Republican banner, which had been hoisted from the housetop in honour of the occasion, and was fluttering before a window which he passed.

"Tut!" said Martin. "You're a gay flag in the distance. But let a man be near enough to get the light upon the other side, and see through you, and you are but sorry fustian!"

## CHAPTER XXII

FROM WHICH IT WILL BE SEEN THAT MARTIN BECAME A
ON HIS OWN ACCOUNT: TOGETHER WITH THE REASON WE

As soon as it was generally known in the National I
that the young Englishman, Mr. Chuzzlewit, had purchase
lo-cation" in the Valley of Eden, and intended to betake hi
to that earthly Paradise by the next steamboat, he bear
popular character. Why this should be, or how it had
to pass, Martin no more knew than Mrs. Gamp of King
Street, High Holborn, did; but that he was, for the time b
the lion, by popular election, of the Watertoast comm
and that his society was in rather inconvenient [illegible]
could be no kind of doubt.

The first notification he received of this [illegible]
tion was the following epistle, written in a thin, [illegible]
— with here and there a fat letter or two, [illegible]
effect more striking, — on a sheet of paper [illegible]
lines.

"National Hotel, M[illegible]

"Dear Sir,

"When I had the privillidge of being your fell[illegible]
in the cars, the day before yesterday, [illegible]
upon the subject of the Tower of L[illegible]
with my fellow citizens generally [illegible]
to a public [illegible]

"As secretary to the Young Men's Watertoast A[illegible]
of this town, I am requested to inform you [illegible]
will be proud to hear you deliver a lect[illegible]
London, at their Hall to-morrow evening, at [illegible]
and as a large issue of quarter-dollar tickets [illegible]
your answer and consent by bearer will be [illegible]

"Dear Sir,

"Yours truly,

"The Honourable M. Chuzzlewit. "La Fayette Kett[illegible]

"P. S. — The Society would not be particular in limiting you to the Tower of London. Permit me to suggest that any remarks upon the Elements of Geology, or (if more convenient) upon the Writings of your talented and witty countryman, the Honourable Mr. Miller, would be well received."

Very much aghast at this invitation, Martin wrote back, civilly declining it; and had scarcely done so, when he received another letter.

"No. 47 Bunker Hill Street,
"(Private.) Monday Morning.

"Sir, —

"I was raised in those interminable solitudes where our mighty Mississippi (or Father of Waters) rolls his turbid flood.

"I am young, and ardent. For there is a poetry in wildness, and every alligator basking in the slime is in himself an Epic, self-contained. I aspirate for fame. It is my yearning and my thirst.

"Are you, sir, aware of any member of Congress in England, who would undertake to pay my expenses to that country, and for six months after my arrival?

"There is something within me which gives me the assurance that this enlightened patronage would not be thrown away. In literature or art; the bar, the pulpit, or the stage; in one or other, if not all, I feel that I am certain to succeed.

"If too much engaged to write to any such yourself, please let me have a list of three or four of those most likely to respond, and I will address them through the Post Office. May I also ask you to favour me with any critical observations that have ever presented themselves to your reflective faculties, on 'Cain, a Mystery,' by the Right Honourable Lord Byron?

"I am, Sir,
"Yours (forgive me if I add, soaringly),
"Putnam Smif.

"P. S. — Address your answer to America Junior, Messrs. Hancock & Floby, Dry Goods Store, as above."

Both of which letters, together with Martin's reply to each, were, according to a laudable custom, much tending to the promotion of gentlemanly feeling and social confidence, published in the next number of the Watertoast Gazette.

had scarcely got through this correspondence, when C
a Redgick, the landlord, kindly came up stairs to see
was getting on. The Captain sat down upon the bed be
spoke; and finding it rather hard, moved to the pillow.

"Well, sir!" said the Captain, putting his hat a little
one side, for it was rather tight in the crown; "you
ite a public man, I calc'late."

"So it seems," retorted Martin, who was very tired.

"Our citizens, sir," pursued the Captain, "intend to
heir respects to you. You will have to hold a sort of lé—
sir, while you 're here."

"Powers above!" cried Martin, "I could n't do that,
d fellow!"

"I reckon you *must*, then," said the Captain.

"Must is not a pleasant word, Captain," urged Martin.

"Well! I did n't fix the mother language, and I can't
fix it," said the Captain coolly; "else I 'd make it pleas
You must re-ceive. That 's all."

"But why should I receive people who care as much for
as I care for them?" asked Martin.

"Well, because I have had a muniment put up in the
returned the Captain.

"A what?" cried Martin.

"A muniment," rejoined the Captain.

Martin looked despairingly at Mark, who informed him
the Captain meant a written notice that Mr Chuzzlewit w
receive the Watertoasters that day, at and after tw
which was, in effect, then hanging in the bar, as Mark
ocular inspection of the same could testify.

"You would n't be unpop'lar, *I* know," said the Capt
paring his nails. "Our citizens ain't long of riling up, I
you, and our Gazette could flay you like a wild cat."

Martin was going to be very wroth, but he thought better
it, and said

"In Heaven's name, let them come, then."

"Oh, *they* ll come," returned the Captain. "I have
the big room fixed a purpose, with my eyes."

"But will you," said Martin, seeing that the Captain
about to go, "will you at least tell me this? What
want to see me for? what have I done? and how
pe[illegible] have such a sudden interest in me?"

Captain Kedgick put a thumb and three fingers to each side of the brim of his hat; lifted it a little way off his head; put it on again carefully; passed one hand all down his face, beginning at the forehead and ending at the chin; looked at Martin; then at Mark; then at Martin again; winked; and walked out.

"Upon my life, now!" said Martin, bringing his hand heavily upon the table; "such a perfectly unaccountable fellow as that, I never saw. Mark, what do you say to this?"

"Why, sir," returned his partner, "my opinion is that we must have got to the MOST remarkable man in the country at last. So I hope there 's an end to the breed, sir."

Although this made Martin laugh, it could n't keep off two o'clock. Punctually, as the hour struck, Captain Kedgick returned to hand him to the room of state; and he had no sooner got him safe there than he bawled down the staircase to his fellow-citizens below that Mr. Chuzzlewit was "receiving."

Up they came with a rush. Up they came until the room was full, and, through the open door, a dismal perspective of more to come was shown upon the stairs. One after another, one after another, dozen after dozen, score after score, more, more, more, up they came; all shaking hands with Martin. Such varieties of hands, the thick, the thin, the short, the long, the fat, the lean, the coarse, the fine; such differences of temperature, the hot, the cold, the dry, the moist, the flabby; such diversities of grasp, the tight, the loose, the short-lived, and the lingering! Still up, up, up, more, more, more; and ever and anon the Captain's voice was heard above the crowd —"There 's more below; there 's more below. Now, gentlemen, you that have been introduced to Mr. Chuzzlewit, will you clear, gentlemen? Will you clear? Will you be so good as clear, gentlemen, and make a little room for more?"

Regardless of the Captain's cries, they did n't clear at all, but stood there, bolt upright and staring. Two gentlemen connected with the Watertoast Gazette had come express to get the matter for an article on Martin. They had agreed to divide the labour. One of them took him below the waistcoat; one above. Each stood directly in front of his subject with his head a little on one side, intent on his department. If Martin put one boot before the other, the lower gentleman

down upon him; he rubbed a pimple on his nose, and
r gentleman booked it. He opened his mouth to ope
the same gentleman was on one knee before him, look
at his teeth, with the nice scrutiny of a dentist. Amate
the physiognomical and phrenological sciences roved ab
n with watchful eyes and itching fingers, and sometimes
more daring than the rest, made a mad grasp at the back of
head, and vanished in the crowd. They had him in all po
f view: in front, in profile, three-quarter face, and beh
those who were not professional or scientific audibly exchan
opinions on his looks. New lights shone in upon him, in
spect of his nose. Contradictory rumours were abroad on
subject of his hair. And still the Captain's voice was heard
so stifled by the concourse that he seemed to speak from und
neath a feather-bed — exclaiming — "Gentlemen, you that h
been introduced to Mr. Chuzzlewit, *will* you clear?"

Even when they began to clear, it was no better, for th
a stream of gentlemen, every one with a lady on each
(exactly like the chorus to the National Anthem when E
goes in state to the play), came gliding in [illegible]
fresher than the last, and bent on staying to the latest [illegible]
If they spoke to him, which was not often, they [illegible]
asked the same questions, in the same tone [illegible]
remorse, or delicacy, or consideration, than if he [illegible]
figure of stone, purchased, and paid for, and set [illegible]
their delight. Even when, in the slow course of [illegible]
died off, it was as bad as ever, if not worse, for the [illegible]
grew bold, and came in as a class of themselves, [illegible]
thing that the grown-up people had done. [illegible]
too appeared, men of a ghostly kind, who, [illegible]
know how to get out again, insomuch that [illegible]
man with glazed and fishy eyes, and only one [illegible]
waistcoat (which was a very large metal one, and [illegible]
giously), got behind the door, and stood there, like a [illegible]
long after everybody else was gone.

Martin felt, from pure fatigue, and heat, and [illegible]
he could have fallen on the ground and willingly [illegible]
there, if they would but have had the mercy to leave [illegible]
alone. But as letters and messages, threatening his [illegible]
denouncement if he did not see the senders, poured in like ha
and as more visitors came while he took his coffee by himse

and as Mark, with all his vigilance, was unable to keep them from the door, he resolved to go to bed — not that he felt at all sure of bed being any protection, but that he might not leave a forlorn hope untried.

He had communicated this design to Mark, and was on the eve of escaping, when the door was thrown open in a great hurry, and an elderly gentleman entered, bringing with him a lady who certainly could not be considered young — that was matter of fact; and probably could not be considered handsome — but that was matter of opinion. She was very straight, very tall, and not at all flexible in face or figure. On her head she wore a great straw bonnet, with trimmings of the same, in which she looked as if she had been thatched by an unskilful labourer; and in her hand she held a most enormous fan.

"Mr. Chuzzlewit, I believe?" said the gentleman.

"That is my name."

"Sir," said the gentleman, "I am pressed for time."

"Thank God!" thought Martin.

"I go back Toe my home, sir," pursued the gentleman, "by the return train, which starts immediate. Start is not a word you use in your country, sir."

"Oh, yes, it is," said Martin.

"You air mistaken, sir," returned the gentleman, with great decision; "but we will not pursue the subject, lest it should awake your prējū—dice. Sir, Mrs. Hominy."

Martin bowed.

"Mrs. Hominy, sir, is the lady of Major Hominy, one of our chicest spirits; and belongs Toe one of our most aristocratic families. You air, p'raps, acquainted, sir, with Mrs. Hominy's writings?"

Martin could n't say he was.

"You have much Toe learn and Toe enjoy, sir," said the gentleman. "Mrs. Hominy is going Toe stay until the end of the Fall, sir, with her married daughter at the settlement of New Thermopylæ, three days this side of Eden. Any attention, sir, that you can show Toe Mrs. Hominy upon the journey will be very grateful Toe the Major and our fellow-cititens. Mrs. Hominy, I wish you good night, ma'am, and a pleasant pro-gress on your rout!"

Martin could scarcely believe it; but he had gone, and Mrs. Hominy was drinking the milk.

…ssed-up, I am, I do declare!" she observed. "The … the cars is pretty nigh as bad as if the rail was full … and sawyers."

…gs and sawyers, ma'am?" said Martin.

…ll, then, I do suppose you 'll hardly realise my meaning," … Mrs. Hominy. "My! Only think! *Do* tell!"

…not appear that these expressions, although they seemed … with an urgent entreaty, stood in need of any … for Mrs. Hominy, untying her bonnet-strings, observed … would withdraw to lay that article of dress aside, and … return immediately.

…k!" said Martin. "Touch me, will you? Am I …"

…minny is, sir," returned his partner — "broad awake! … one sort of woman, sir, as would be discovered with her eyes wide open, and her mind a working for her country's good, at any hour of the day or night."

They had no opportunity of saying more, for Mrs. Hominy stalked in again — very erect, in proof of her aristocratic blood, and holding in her clasped hands a red cotton pocket-handkerchief, perhaps a parting gift from that choice spirit, the Major. She had laid aside her bonnet, and now appeared in a … aristocratic and classical cap, meeting beneath her chin … of head-dress so admirably adapted to her countenance that … the late Mr. Grimaldi had appeared in the lappets of Mrs. Siddons, a more complete effect could not have been produced.

Martin handed her to a chair. Her first words arrested … before he could get back to his own seat,

"Pray, sir!" said Mrs. Hominy, "where do you hail from?"

"I am afraid I am dull of comprehension," answered Martin, "being extremely tired, but, upon my word, I do not understand you."

Mrs. Hominy shook her head with a melancholy smile, and said, not inexpressively, "They corrupt even the language of that old country!" and added them, as coming down a peg or two to meet his low capacity, "Where was you born?"

"Oh!" said Martin, "I was born in Kent."

"And how do you like our country, sir?" asked Mrs. Hominy.

"Very much, indeed," said Martin, half asleep. "At … — that is … pretty well, ma'am."

"Most strangers — and partick'larly Britishers — are much surprised by what they see in the U-nited States," remarked Mrs. Hominy.

"They have excellent reason to be so, ma'am," said Martin. 'I never was so much surprised in all my life."

"Our institutions make our people smart much, sir?" Mrs. Hominy remarked.

"The most short-sighted man could see that at a glance, with his naked eye," said Martin.

Mrs. Hominy was a philosopher and an authoress, and consequently had a pretty strong digestion; but this coarse, this indecorous phrase, was almost too much for her. For a gentleman sitting alone with a lady — although the door *was* open — to talk about a naked eye!

A long interval elapsed before even she — woman of masculine and towering intellect though she was — could call up fortitude enough to resume the conversation. But Mrs. Hominy was a traveller. Mrs. Hominy was a writer of reviews and analytical disquisitions. Mrs. Hominy had had her letters from abroad, beginning "My ever dearest blank," and signed "The Mother of the Modern Gracchi" (meaning the married Miss Hominy), regularly printed in a public journal, with all the indignation in capitals, and all the sarcasm in italics. Mrs. Hominy had looked on foreign countries with the eye of a perfect republican hot from the model oven; and Mrs. Hominy could talk (or write) about them by the hour together. So Mrs. Hominy at last came down on Martin heavily, and, as he was fast asleep, she had it all her own way, and bruised him to her heart's content.

It is no great matter what Mrs. Hominy said, save that she had learned it from the cant of a class, and a large class, of her fellow-countrymen, who, in their every word, avow themselves to be as senseless to the high principles on which America sprang, a nation, into life, as any Orson in her legislative halls; who are no more capable of feeling, or of caring if they did feel, that, by reducing their own country to the ebb of honest men's contempt, they put in hazard the rights of nations yet unborn, and the very progress of the human race, than are the swine who wallow in their streets; who think that crying out to other nations, old in their iniquity, "We are no worse than you!" (no worse!) is high defence and 'vantage ground

for that Republic, but yesterday let loose upon
novus course, and but to-day so maimed and lame, so f
sores and ulcers, foul to the eye and almost hopeless t
sense, that her best friends turn from the loathsome ex
with disgust; who, having by their ancestors declared an
their Independence, because they would not bend the
to certain Public vices and corruptions, and would not al
the truth, run riot in the Bad, and turn their backs up
Good, and lying down contented with the wretched bus
other Temples also are of glass, and stones which batter
may be flung back, — show themselves, in that alone, as in
urably behind the import of the trust they hold, and u
worthy to possess it, as if the sordid huckstering of all
little governments — each one a kingdom in its small dep
— were brought into a heap for evidence against them.

Martin by degrees became so far awake that he had a
of a terrible oppression on his mind; an imperfect dream
**he had murdered a particular friend, and could n't get**
**the body.** When his eyes opened it was staring him
the face. There was the horrible Hominy, talking
in a melodious snuffle, and pouring forth her
ments to such an extent that the Major
hearing her, would have forgiven him from the
heart. Martin might have done something
gong had not sounded for supper, but seemed
tunely; and having stationed Mrs. Hominy at the
of the table, he took refuge at the lower end
after a hasty meal, he stole away, while the lady
with dried beef and a whole saucerful of pickled

It would be difficult to give an adequate idea of Mrs
my's freshness next day, or of the avidity with
went headlong into moral philosophy at breakfast.
additional degree of asperity, perhaps, was visible in
tures, but not more than the pickles would have
duced. All that day she clung to Martin. She sat
while he received his friends — for there was an
then, yet more numerous than the former
ries, and answered imaginary objections, so that Martin
began to think he must be dreaming, and
quoted interminable passages from certain
ment, written by herself, used the Major's pocket

as if the snuffle were a temporary malady, of which she was determined to rid herself by some means or other; and, in short, was such a remarkable companion that Martin quite settled it between himself and his conscience that in any new settlement it would be absolutely necessary to have such a person knocked on the head for the general peace of society.

In the mean time Mark was busy, from early in the morning until late at night, in getting on board the steamboat such provisions, tools, and other necessaries as they had been forewarned it would be wise to take. The purchase of these things, and the settlement of their bill at the National, reduced their finances to so low an ebb that, if the captain had delayed his departure any longer, they would have been in almost as bad a plight as the unfortunate poorer emigrants, who (seduced on board by solemn advertisement) had been living on the lower deck a whole week, and exhausting their miserable stock of provisions before the voyage commenced. There they were, all huddled together, with the engine and the fires. Farmers who had never seen a plough; woodmen who had never used an axe; builders who could n't make a box, — cast out of their own land, with not a hand to aid them; newly come into an unknown world, children in helplessness, but men in wants — with younger children at their backs, to live or die as it might happen!

The morning came; and they would start at noon. Noon came, and they would start at night. But nothing is eternal in this world, not even the procrastination of an American skipper, and at night all was ready.

Dispirited and weary to the last degree, but a greater lion than ever (he had done nothing all the afternoon but answer letters from strangers; half of them about nothing; half about borrowing money; and all requiring an instantaneous reply), Martin walked down to the wharf, through a concourse of people, with Mrs. Hominy upon his arm; and went on board. But Mark was bent on solving the riddle of this lionship, if he could; and so, not without the risk of being left behind, ran back to the hotel.

Captain Kedgick was sitting in the colonnade, with a julep on his knee, and a cigar in his mouth. He caught Mark's eye, and said: —

"Why, what the 'Tarnal brings you here?"

ll you plainly what it is, Captain," said Mark
ant to ask you a question."

"A man may *ask* a question, so he may," returned Kod
igly implying that another man might not answer a
ion, so he might n't.

"What have they been making so much of him for, n
id Mark slily. "Come!"

"Our people like ex-citement," answered Kedgick, sm
his cigar.

**"But how has he excited 'em!" asked Mark.**

**The Captain looked at him as if he were half inclin
unburden his mind of a capital joke.**

**"You air a going!" he said.**

**"Going!" cried Mark. "Ain't every moment precious**

**"Our people like ex-citement," said the Captain, whisp
"He ain't like emigrants in gin'ral; and he excited 'em
of this;" he winked and burst into a smothered laugh; "
of this. Scadder is a smart man, and — and — nobody ex
to Eden ever comes back a-live!"**

The wharf was close at hand, and at that instant Mark
hear them shouting out his name — could even hear M
calling to him to make haste or they would be separated
was too late to mend the matter, or put any face upon
the best. He gave the Captain a parting [illegible]
off like a race-horse.

"Mark! Mark!" cried Martin.

"Here am I, sir!" shouted Mark, suddenly reaching
the edge of the spray, and leaping at a bound on to
"Never was half so jolly, sir. All right. Hard a-
ahead!"

The sparks from the wood fire streamed upward from
two chimneys, as if the vessel were a great brewer
lighted, and they roared away upon the dark water

## CHAPTER XXIII

MARTIN AND HIS PARTNER TAKE POSSESSION OF THEIR ESTATE: THE JOYFUL OCCASION INVOLVES SOME FURTHER ACCOUNT OF EDEN.

THERE happened to be on board the steamboat several gentlemen passengers, of the same stamp as Martin's New York friend Mr. Bevan; and in their society he was cheerful and happy. They released him as well as they could from the intellectual entanglements of Mrs. Hominy; and exhibited, in all they said and did, so much good sense and high feeling that he could not like them too well. "If this were a republic of Intellect and Worth," he said, "instead of vapouring and jobbing, they would not want the levers to keep it in motion."

"Having good tools, and using bad ones," returned Mr. Tapley, "would look as if they was rather a poor sort of carpenters, sir, would n't it?"

Martin nodded. "As if their work were infinitely above their powers and purpose, Mark; and they botched it in consequence."

"The best on it is," said Mark, "that when they do happen to make a decent stroke — such as better workmen, with no such opportunities, make every day of their lives and think nothing of — they begin to sing out so surprising loud. Take notice of my words, sir. If ever the defaulting part of this here country pays its debts — along of finding that not paying 'em won't do in a commercial point of view, you see, and is inconvenient in its consequences — they 'll take such a shine out of it, and make such bragging speeches, that a man might suppose no borrowed money had ever been paid afore, since the world was first begun. That 's the way they gammon each other, sir. Bless you, *I* know 'em. Take notice of my words, now!"

"You seem to be growing profoundly sagacious!" cried Martin, laughing.

ether that is," thought Mark, "because I'm a
journey nearer Eden, and am brightening up, afore I
can't say. P'raps by the time I get there, I shall have g
into a prophet."

He gave no utterance to these sentiments; but the ex
joviality they inspired within him, and the merriment
brought upon his shining face, were quite enough for M
Although he might sometimes profess to make light
partner's inexhaustible cheerfulness, and might sometim
in the case of Zephaniah Scadder, find him too jocose
mentator, he was always sensible of the effect of his o
in rousing him to hopefulness and courage. Whether h
in the humour to profit by it mattered not a jot. It wa
tagious, and he could not choose but be affected.

At first they parted with some of their passengers
twice a day, and took in others to replace them. I
degrees the towns upon their route became more thin
tered; and for many hours together they would see n
habitations than the huts of the wood-cutters, where th
stopped for fuel. Sky, wood, and water, all the [illegible]
and heat that blistered everything it touched.

On they toiled through great solitudes, where the tre
the banks grew thick and close, and floated in the stre
held up shrivelled arms from out the river's depths
down from the margin of the land, half growing, half
ing, in the miry water. On through the weary [illegible]
cholly night, beneath the burning sun, and in the
vapour of the evening, [illegible] on, until return appeared [illegible]
and restoration to their home a miserable dream.

They had now but few people on board, and these
as flat, as dull and stagnant, as the vegetation that
their eyes. No sound of cheerfulness or hope was
pleasant talk beguiled the tardy time [illegible]
common cause against the dull depression of the [illegible]
that, at certain periods, they swallowed food together
common trough, it might have been old Charon's [illegible]
ing melancholy shades to judgment.

At length they drew near New Thermopylæ, where
same evening, Mrs. Hominy would disembark. A [illegible]
comfort sunk into Martin's bosom when she told him
Mark needed none; but he was not displeased.

It was almost night when they came alongside the landing-ace — a steep bank with an hotel, like a barn, on the top of a wooden store or two; and a few scattered sheds.

"You sleep here to-night, and go on in the morning, I sup-se, ma'am?" said Martin.

"Where should I go on to?" cried the mother of the modern acchi.

"To New Thermopylæ."

"My! ain't I there?" said Mrs. Hominy.

Martin looked for it all round the darkening panorama; but could n't see it, and was obliged to say so.

"Why, that 's it!" cried Mrs. Hominy, pointing to the eds just mentioned.

"*That!*" exclaimed Martin.

"Ah! that; and work it which way you will, it whips len," said Mrs. Hominy, nodding her head with great expres-n.

The married Miss Hominy, who had come on board with r husband, gave to this statement her most unqualified sup-rt, as did that gentleman also. Martin gratefully declined eir invitation to regale himself at their house during the half ur of the vessel's stay; and having escorted Mrs. Hominy d the red pocket-handkerchief (which was still on active ser-e) safely across the gangway, returned in a thoughtful mood watch the emigrants as they removed their goods ashore.

Mark, as he stood beside him, glanced in his face from time time; anxious to discover what effect this dialogue had had on him, and not unwilling that his hopes should be dashed fore they reached their destination, so that the blow he ared might be broken in its fall. But saving that he some-nes looked up quickly at the poor erections on the hill, he ve him no clue to what was passing in his mind until they re again upon their way.

"Mark," he said then, "are there really none but ourselves board this boat who are bound for Eden?"

"None at all, sir. Most of 'em, as you know, have stopped ort; and the few that are left are going further on. What atters that? More room there for us, sir."

"Oh, to be sure!" said Martin. "But I was thinking —" d there he paused.

"Yes, sir?" observed Mark.

odd it was that the people should have arrang
their fortune at a wretched hole like that, for inst
when there is such a much better, and such a very diff
kind of place, near at hand, as one may say."

He spoke in a tone so very different from his usual
dence, and with such an obvious dread of Mark's reply,
the good-natured fellow was full of pity.

"Why, you know, sir," said Mark, as gently as he coul
any means insinuate the observation, "we must guard a
being too sanguine. There's no occasion for it, either, be
we're determined to make the best of everything, afte
know the worst of it. Ain't we, sir?"

Martin looked at him, but answered not a word.

"Even Eden, you know, ain't all built," said Mark.

"In the name of Heaven, man," cried Martin an
"don't talk of Eden in the same breath with that place.
you mad? There — God forgive me! — don't think hard
me for my temper!"

After that, he turned away, and walked to and fr
deck full two hours. Nor did he speak again, ex
"Good night," until next day, nor even then
ject, but on other topics quite foreign to the purpose.

As they proceeded further on their track, and
and more towards their journey's end, the m
tion of the scene increased to that degree that, f
ing feature it presented to their eyes, they might have
in the body, on the grim domains of Giant Despair
morass, bestrewn with fallen timber, a marsh on
good growth of the earth seemed to have been wrecked
away, that from its decomposing ashes vile and
might rise, where the very trees took the aspect of
begotten of the slime from which they sprung,
that burnt them up, where fatal maladies, seeking
might infect, came forth at night, in misty shapes,
ing out upon the water, hunted them like spectres
where even the blessed sun, shining down on fostering
of corruption and disease, became a horror, — this was
of Hope through which they moved.

At last they stopped. At Eden, too. The waters
Deluge might have left it but a week before, so
slime and matted growth was the hideous swamp
that name.

There being no depth of water close inshore, they landed from the vessel's boat, with all their goods beside them. There were a few log houses visible among the dark trees; the best, a cow-shed or a rude stable; but for the wharves, the market-place, the public buildings —

"Here comes an Edener," said Mark. "He'll get us help to carry these things up. Keep a good heart, sir. Hallo there!"

The man advanced towards them through the thickening gloom, very slowly, leaning on a stick. As he drew nearer, they observed that he was pale and worn, and that his anxious eyes were deeply sunken in his head. His dress of homespun blue hung about him in rags; his feet and head were bare. He sat down on a stump halfway, and beckoned them to come to him. When they complied, he put his hand upon his side as if in pain, and while he fetched his breath stared at them, wondering.

"Strangers!" he exclaimed, as soon as he could speak.

"The very same," said Mark. "How are you, sir?"

"I've had the fever very bad," he answered faintly. "I haven't stood upright these many weeks. Those are your notions I see?" pointing to their property.

"Yes, sir," said Mark, "they are. You couldn't recommend us some one as would lend a hand to help carry 'em up to the — to the town, could you, sir?"

"My eldest son would do it if he could," replied the man; "but to-day he has his chill upon him, and is lying wrapped up in the blankets. My youngest died last week."

"I'm sorry for it, governor, with all my heart," said Mark, shaking him by the hand. "Don't mind us. Come along with me, and I'll give you an arm back. The goods is safe enough, sir," — to Martin, — "there ain't many people about, to make away with 'em. What a comfort that is!"

"No," cried the man. "You must look for such folk here," knocking his stick upon the ground, "or yonder in the bush, towards the north. We've buried most of 'em. The rest have gone away. Them that we have here don't come out at night."

"The night air ain't quite wholesome, I suppose?" said Mark.

"It's deadly poison," was the settler's answer.

howed no more uneasiness than if it had been
uenced to him as ambrosia; but he gave the man his
und as they went along explained to him the nature of
urchase, and inquired where it lay. Close to his own
use, he said; so close that he had used their dwelling
store-house for some corn; they must excuse it that night,
he would endeavour to get it taken out upon the morrow.
then gave them to understand, as an additional scrap of
chit-chat, that he had buried the last proprietor with his
hands; a piece of information which Mark also received
out the least abatement of his equanimity.

In a word, he conducted them to a miserable cabin,
constructed of the trunks of trees, the door of which had
fallen down or been carried away long ago, and which
consequently open to the wild landscape and the dark
Saving for the little store he had mentioned, it was pos
bare of all furniture; but they had left a chest upon the
ing-place, and he gave them a rude torch in lieu of
This latter acquisition Mark planted in the hearth, and
declaring that the mansion "looked quite comfortable,"
Martin off again to help bring up the chest.
to the landing-place and back, Mark talked in
he would infuse into his partner's breast some faint
they had arrived under the most auspicious and
imaginable circumstances.

But many a man who would have stood within a
mantled, strong in his passion and design of
had the firmness of his nature conquered by the
built castle. When the log-hut received them,
time, Martin lay down upon the ground, and

"Lord love you, sir!" cried Mr. Tapley, "
"don't do that! Don't do that, sir! Anything but
never helped man, woman, or child over the
sir, and it never will. Besides its being of
worse than of no use to me, for the least
me flat down. I can't stand up again it, sir.
that."

There is no doubt he spoke the truth, for the
alarm with which he looked at Martin as he
knees before the chest, in the act of unlocking it,
words, sufficiently confirmed him.

"I ask your forgiveness a thousand times, my dear fellow," said Martin. "I could n't have helped it, if death had been the penalty."

"Ask my forgiveness!" said Mark, with his accustomed cheerfulness, as he proceeded to unpack the chest. "The head partner a asking forgiveness of Co., eh? There must be something wrong in the firm when that happens. I must have the books inspected, and the accounts gone over immediate. Here we are. Everything in its proper place. Here 's the salt pork. Here 's the biscuit. Here 's the whiskey — uncommon good it smells, too. Here 's the tin pot. This tin pot 's a small fortun' in itself! Here 's the blankets. Here 's the axe. Who says we ain't got a first-rate fit out? I feel as if I was a cadet gone out to Indy, and my noble father was chairman of the Board of Directors. Now, when I 've got some water from the stream afore the door and mixed the grog," cried Mark, running out to suit the action to the word, "there 's a supper ready, comprising every delicacy of the season. Here we are, sir, all complete. For what we are going to receive, et cetrer. Lord bless you, sir, it 's very like a gipsy party!"

It was impossible not to take heart, in the company of such a man as this. Martin sat upon the ground beside the box; took out his knife, and ate and drank sturdily.

"Now you see," said Mark, when they had made a hearty meal; "with your knife and mine, I sticks this blanket right afore the door, or where, in a state of high civilisation, the door would be. And very neat it looks. Then I stops the aperture below, by putting the chest agin it. And very neat *that* looks. Then there 's your blanket, sir. Then here 's mine. And what 's to hinder our passing a good night?"

For all his light-hearted speaking, it was long before he slept himself. He wrapped his blanket round him, put the axe ready to his hand, and lay across the threshold of the door, too anxious and too watchful to close his eyes. The novelty of their dreary situation, the dread of some rapacious animal or human enemy, the terrible uncertainty of their means of subsistence, the apprehension of death, the immense distance and the hosts of obstacles between themselves and England, were fruitful sources of disquiet in the deep silence of the night. Though Martin would have had him think

otherwise, Mark felt that he was waking also, and a prey to the same reflections. This was almost worse than all, for if he began to brood over their miseries instead of trying to make head against them, there could be little doubt that such a state of mind would powerfully assist the influence of the pestilent climate. Never had the light of day been half so welcome to his eyes, as when awaking from a fitful doze, Mark saw it shining through the blanket in the doorway.

He stole out gently, for his companion was sleeping now; and having refreshed himself by washing in the river, where it flowed before the door, took a rough survey of the settlement. There were not above a score of cabins in the whole; half of these appeared untenanted; all were rotten and decayed. The most tottering, abject, and forlorn among them, was called, with great propriety, the Bank, and National Credit Office. It had some feeble props about it, but was settling deep down in the mud, past all recovery.

Here and there an effort had been made to clear the land, and something like a field had been marked out, where, among the stumps and ashes of burnt trees, a scanty crop of Indian corn was growing. In some quarters a snake or zigzag fence had been begun, but in no instance had it been completed; and the fallen logs, half hidden in the soil, lay mouldering away. Three or four meagre dogs, wasted and vexed with hunger; some long-legged pigs, wandering away into the woods in search of food; some children, nearly naked, gazing at him from the huts, were all the living things he saw. A fetid vapour, hot and sickening as the breath of an oven, rose up from the earth, and hung on everything around; and as his foot-prints sunk into the marshy ground, a black ooze started forth to blot them out.

Their own land was mere forest. The trees had grown so thick and close that they shouldered one another out of their places, and the weakest, forced into shapes of strange distortion, languished like cripples. The best were stunted, from the pressure and the want of room; and high about the stems of all grew long rank grass, dank weeds, and frowsy underwood; not devisable into their separate kinds, but tangled all together in a heap; a jungle deep and dark, with neither earth nor water at its roots, but putrid matter, formed of the pulpy offal of the two, and of their own corruption.

He went down to the landing-place, where they had left their goods last night; and there he found some half-dozen men — wan and forlorn to look at, but ready enough to assist — who helped him to carry them to the log-house. They shook their heads in speaking of the settlement, and had no comfort to give him. Those who had the means of going away had all deserted it. They who were left had lost their wives, their children, friends, or brothers there, and suffered much themselves. Most of them were ill then; none were the men they had been once. They frankly offered their assistance and advice, and leaving him for that time, went sadly off upon their several tasks.

Martin was by this time stirring; but he had greatly changed, even in one night. He was very pale and languid; he spoke of pains and weakness in his limbs, and complained that his sight was dim and his voice feeble. Increasing in his own briskness as the prospect grew more and more dismal, Mark brought away a door from one of the deserted houses, and fitted it to their own habitation; then went back again for a rude bench he had observed, with which he presently returned in triumph; and having put this piece of furniture outside the house, arranged the notable tin pot and other such movables upon it, that it might represent a dresser or a sideboard. Greatly satisfied with this arrangement, he next rolled their cask of flour into the house, and set it up on end in one corner, where it served for a side table. No better dining-table could be required than the chest, which he solemnly devoted to that useful service thenceforth. Their blankets, clothes, and the like, he hung on pegs and nails. And lastly, he brought forth a great placard (which Martin in the exultation of his heart had prepared with his own hands at the National Hotel), bearing the inscription, CHUZZLEWIT & Co., ARCHITECTS AND SURVEYORS, which he displayed upon the most conspicuous part of the premises, with as much gravity as if the thriving city of Eden had had a real existence, and they expected to be overwhelmed with business.

"These here tools," said Mark, bringing forward Martin's case of instruments and sticking the compasses upright in a stump before the door, "shall be set out in the open air to show that we come provided. And now, if any gentleman

s a house built, he'd better give his orders, afore w
other ways bespoke."

Considering the intense heat of the weather, this was
ad morning's work; but without pausing for a mom
hough he was streaming at every pore, Mark vanished
he house again, and presently reappeared with a hat
ntent on performing some impossibilities with that implem

"Here's a ugly old tree in the way, sir," he obser
"which'll be all the better down. We can build the ove
the afternoon. There never was such a handy spot for cl
Eden is. That's convenient, anyhow."

But Martin gave him no answer. He had sat the w
time with his head upon his hands, gazing at the curren
it rolled swiftly by; thinking, perhaps, how fast it m
towards the open sea, the high road to the home he n
would behold again.

Not even the vigorous strokes which Mark dealt at the
awoke him from his mournful meditation. Finding all
endeavours to rouse him of no use, Mark stopped in his
and came towards him.

"Don't give in, sir," said Mr. Tapley.

"Oh, Mark," returned his friend, "what have I [illegible]
my life that has deserved this heavy fate?"

"Why, sir," returned Mark, "for the matter of [illegible]
body as is here might say the same thing [illegible]
better reason p'raps than you or me. Hold up, sir [illegible]
thing. Couldn't you ease your mind, now, [illegible]
by making some personal observations in a letter [illegible]

"No," said Martin, shaking his head sorrowfully. [illegible]
that."

"But if you're past that already," returned Mark
must be ill and ought to be attended to."

"Don't mind me," said Martin. "Do the best you [illegible]
yourself. You'll soon have only yourself to [illegible]
then God speed you home, and forgive me for bringing
here! I am destined to die in this place. I felt it the [illegible]
I set foot upon the shore. Sleeping or waking, Mark
dreamed it all last night."

"I said you must be ill," returned Mark tenderly, [illegible]
I'm sure of it. A touch of fever and ague [illegible]
rivers, I dare say; but bless you, *that's* nothing. [illegible]

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a seasoning; and we must all be seasoned, one way or another. That 's religion, that is, you know," said Mark.

He only sighed and shook his head.

"Wait half a minute," said Mark cheerily, "till I run up to one of our neighbours and ask what 's best to be took, and borrow a little of it to give you; and to-morrow you 'll find yourself as strong as ever again. I won't be gone a minute. Don't give in, while I 'm away, whatever you do!"

Throwing down his hatchet, he sped away immediately, but stopped when he had got a little distance, and looked back; then hurried on again.

"Now, Mr. Tapley," said Mark, giving himself a tremendous blow in the chest by way of reviver, "just you attend to what I 've got to say. Things is looking about as bad as they *can* look, young man. You 'll not have such another opportunity for showing your jolly disposition, my fine fellow, as long as you live. And therefore, Tapley, Now 's your time to come out strong; or Never!"

## CHAPTER XXIV

**PORTS PROGRESS IN SOME HOMELY MATTERS OF LOVE, HAT[illegible] JEALOUSY, AND REVENGE.**

"HALLO, Pecksniff!" cried Mr. Jonas from the parl[illegible] "Isn't somebody a going to open that precious old door yours?"

"Immediately, Mr. Jonas. Immediately."

"Eood," muttered the orphan, "not before it's time neith[illegible] Whoever it is, has knocked three times, and each one l[illegible] enough to wake the" — he had such a repugnance to the i[illegible] of waking the Dead, that he stopped even then with the w[illegible] upon his tongue, and said instead, "the Seven Sleepers."

"Immediately, Mr. Jonas; immediately," [illegible] sniff. "Thomas Pinch" — he couldn't make [illegible] his great agitation, whether to call Tom his dear [illegible] villain, so he shook his fist at him *pro tem* [illegible] daughters' room, and tell them who is here. Say [illegible] Silence! Do you hear me, sir?"

"Directly, sir!" cried Tom, departing, in a state [illegible] amazement, on his errand.

"You'll — ha, ha, ha! — you'll excuse me, Mr. Jonas, [illegible] close this door a moment, will you?" said Pecksniff. [illegible] may be a professional call. Indeed I am pretty [illegible] Thank you." Then Mr. Pecksniff, gently warming [illegible] stave, put on his garden hat, seized a spade, [illegible] street door calmly appearing on the threshold, [illegible] he had, from his vineyard, heard a modest rap, [illegible] quite certain.

Seeing a gentleman and lady before him, he started [illegible] as much confusion as a good man with a crystal [illegible] might betray in mere surprise. Recognition came [illegible] the next moment, and he cried:

"Mr. Chuzzlewit! Can I believe my eyes? My [illegible] my good sir! A joyful hour; a happy hour indeed. [illegible]

dear sir, walk in. You find me in my garden-dress. You will excuse it, I know. It is an ancient pursuit, gardening. Primitive, my dear sir; for, if I am not mistaken, Adam was the first of our calling. *My* Eve, I grieve to say, is no more, sir; but" — here he pointed to his spade, and shook his head, as if he were not cheerful without an effort — "but I do a little bit of Adam still."

He had by this time got them into the best parlour, where the portrait by Spiller and the bust by Spoker were.

"My daughters," said Mr. Pecksniff, "will be overjoyed. If I could feel weary upon such a theme, I should have been worn out long ago, my dear sir, by their constant anticipation of this happiness, and their repeated allusions to our meeting at Mrs. Todgers's. Their fair young friend, too," said Mr. Pecksniff, "whom they so desire to know and love — indeed to know her, *is* to love — I hope I see her well. I hope in saying, 'Welcome to my humble roof!' I find some echo in her own sentiments. If features are an index to the heart, I have no fears of that. An extremely engaging expression of countenance, Mr. Chuzzlewit, my dear sir — very much so!"

"Mary," said the old man, "Mr. Pecksniff flatters you. But flattery from him is worth the having. He is not a dealer in it, and it comes from his heart. We thought Mr. ——"

"Pinch," said Mary.

"Mr. Pinch would have arrived before us, Pecksniff."

"He did arrive before you, my dear sir," retorted Pecksniff, raising his voice for the edification of Tom upon the stairs, "and was about, I dare say, to tell me of your coming, when I begged him first to knock at my daughters' chamber, and inquire after Charity, my dear child, who is not so well as I could wish. No," said Mr. Pecksniff, answering their looks, "I am sorry to say, she is not. It is merely an hysterical affection; nothing more. I am not uneasy. Mr. Pinch! Thomas!" exclaimed Pecksniff, in his kindest accents. "Pray come in. I shall make no stranger of you. Thomas is a friend of mine of rather long standing, Mr. Chuzzlewit, you must know."

"Thank you, sir," said Tom. "You introduce me very kindly, and speak of me in terms of which I am very proud."

"Old Thomas!" cried his master pleasantly, "God bless you!"

n reported that the young ladies would appear direct
ad that the best refreshments which the house afforded w
n then in preparation, under their joint superintender
le he was speaking, the old man looked at him inter
gh with less harshness than was common to him; nor
mutual embarrassment of Tom and the young lady,
hatever cause he attributed it, seem to escape his observati
"Pecksniff," he said after a pause, rising and taking
de towards the window, "I was much shocked on hearing
y brother's death. We had been strangers for many ye
My only comfort is that he must have lived the happier
better man for having associated no hopes or schemes with
Peace to his memory! We were play-fellows once; and
would have been better for us both if we had died then."

Finding him in this gentle mood, Mr. Pecksniff began to
another way out of his difficulties, besides the casting o
board of Jonas.

"That any man, my dear sir, could possibly be the hap
for not knowing you," he returned, "you will excuse my d
ing. But that Mr. Anthony, in the evening of his life
happy in the affection of his excellent son — a pattern, my
sir, a pattern to all sons — and in the care of a distant rela
who, however lowly in his means of serving him, had no
to his inclination, *I* can inform you."

"How's this?" said the old man. "You are not a legate

"You don't," said Mr. Pecksniff, with a melancholy
of his hand, "quite understand my nature yet, I fr
sir, I am not a legatee. I am proud to say I am not a lega
I am proud to say that neither of my children is a lega
And yet, sir, I was with him at his own request. *He*
stood me somewhat better, sir. He wrote and said, 'I am
I am sinking. Come to me!' I went to him. I sat
his bed, sir, and I stood beside his grave. Yes, at the
offending even *you*, I did it, sir. Though the avowal
lead to our instant separation, and to the severing of
der ties between us which have recently been formed, I
it. But I am not a legatee," said Mr. Pecksniff, smiling
passionately, "and I never expected to be a legatee. I a
better!"

"His son a pattern!" cried old Martin. "How can you
me that? My brother had in his wealth the usual

wealth, and root of misery. He carried his corrupting influence with him, go where he would; and shed it round him, even on his hearth. It made of his own child a greedy expectant, who measured every day and hour the lessening distance between his father and the grave, and cursed his tardy progress on that dismal road."

"No!" cried Mr. Pecksniff boldly. "Not at all, sir!"

"But I saw that shadow in his house," said Martin Chuzzlewit, "the last time we met, and warned him of its presence. I know it when I see it, do I not? I, who have lived within it all these years!"

"I deny it," Mr. Pecksniff answered warmly. "I deny it altogether. That bereaved young man is now in this house, sir, seeking in change of scene the peace of mind he has lost. Shall I be backward in doing justice to that young man, when even undertakers and coffin-makers have been moved by the conduct he has exhibited; when even mutes have spoken in his praise, and the medical man has n't known what to do with himself in the excitement of his feelings! There is a person of the name of Gamp, sir — Mrs. Gamp — ask her. She saw Mr. Jonas in a trying time. Ask *her*, sir. She is respectable, but not sentimental, and will state the fact. A line addressed to Mrs. Gamp, at the Bird Shop, Kingsgate Street, High Holborn, London, will meet with every attention, I have no doubt. Let her be examined, my good sir. Strike, but hear! leap, Mr. Chuzzlewit, but look! Forgive me, my dear sir," said Mr. Pecksniff taking both his hands, "if I am warm; but I am honest, and must state the truth."

In proof of the character he gave himself, Mr. Pecksniff suffered tears of honesty to ooze out of his eyes.

The old man gazed at him for a moment with a look of wonder, repeating to himself, "Here now! In this house!" But he mastered his surprise, and said, after a pause: —

"Let me see him."

"In a friendly spirit, I hope?" said Mr. Pecksniff. "Forgive me, sir, but he is in the receipt of my humble hospitality."

"I said," replied the old man, "let me see him. If I were disposed to regard him in any other than a friendly spirit, I should have said, keep us apart."

"Certainly, my dear sir; so you would. You are frankness itself, I know. I will break this happiness to him," said Mr.

[illegible]csniff as he left the room, "if you will excuse me for a [illegible] [illegible]—gently."

He paved the way to the disclosure so very gently, [illegible] quarter of an hour elapsed before he returned with Mr. Jo[illegible] In the mean time the young ladies had made their appear[illegible] and the table had been set out for the refreshment of the [illegible] ellers.

Now, however well Mr. Pecksniff, in his morality, had ta[illegible] Jonas the lesson of dutiful behaviour to his uncle, and how perfectly Jonas, in the cunning of his nature, had learnt it, [illegible] young man's bearing, when presented to his father's bro[illegible] was anything but manly or engaging. Perhaps, indeed, so [illegible] gular a mixture of defiance and obsequiousness, of fear [illegible] hardihood, of dogged sullenness and an attempt at cringing [illegible] propitiation, never was expressed in any one human figure [illegible] that of Jonas, when, having raised his downcast eyes to [illegible] tin's face, he let them fall again, and uneasily closing and closing his hands without a moment's intermission, stood [illegible] ing himself from side to side, waiting to be addressed.

"Nephew," said the old man. "You have been a [illegible] son, I hear."

"As dutiful as sons in general, I suppose," [illegible] looking up and down once more. "I don't [illegible] any better than other sons, but I haven't been [illegible] dare say."

"A pattern to all sons, I am told," said the old man, [illegible] cing towards Mr. Pecksniff.

"Ecod!" said Jonas, looking up again for a moment, shaking his head, "I've been as good a son as ever [illegible] brother. It's the pot and the kettle, if you come to that."

"You speak bitterly, in the violence of your [illegible]" Martin, after a pause. "Give me your hand."

Jonas did so, and was almost at his ease. "Pecksniff," [illegible] whispered, as they drew their chairs about the table, "[illegible] him as good as he brought, eh? He had better look at [illegible] before he looks out of window, I think!"

Mr. Pecksniff only answered by a nudge of the elbow, which might either be construed into an indignant remonstrance [illegible] but which, in any case, was an emphatic [illegible] [illegible] to his chosen son-in-law to be silent. He then [illegible] [illegible] the honours of the house with his accustomed [illegible] [illegible].

But not even Mr. Pecksniff's guileless merriment could set such a party at their ease, or reconcile materials so utterly discordant and conflicting as those with which he had to deal. The unspeakable jealousy and hatred which that night's explanation had sown in Charity's breast was not to be so easily kept down; and more than once it showed itself in such intensity, as seemed to render a full disclosure of all the circumstances, then and there, impossible to be avoided. The beauteous Merry, too, with all the glory of her conquest fresh upon her, so probed and lanced the rankling disappointment of her sister by her capricious airs and thousand little trials of Mr. Jonas's obedience, that she almost goaded her into a fit of madness, and obliged her to retire from table in a burst of passion hardly less vehement than that to which she had abandoned herself in the first tumult of her wrath. The constraint imposed upon the family by the presence among them for the first time of Mary Graham (for by that name old Martin Chuzzlewit had introduced her) did not at all improve this state of things, gentle and quiet though her manner was. Mr. Pecksniff's situation was peculiarly trying: for, what with having constantly to keep the peace between his daughters; to maintain a reasonable show of affection and unity in his household; to curb the growing ease and gaiety of Jonas, which vented itself in sundry insolences towards Mr. Pinch, and an indefinable coarseness of manner in reference to Mary (they being the two dependants); to make no mention at all of his having perpetually to conciliate his rich old relative, and to smooth down, or explain away, some of the ten thousand bad appearances and combinations of bad appearances, by which they were surrounded on that unlucky evening — what with having to do this, and it would be difficult to sum up how much more, without the least relief or assistance from anybody, it may be easily imagined that Mr. Pecksniff had in his enjoyment something more than that usual portion of alloy which is mixed up with the best of men's delights. Perhaps he had never in his life felt such relief as when old Martin, looking at his watch, announced that it was time to go.

"We have rooms," he said, "at the Dragon, for the present. I have a fancy for the evening walk. The nights are dark just now; perhaps Mr. Pinch would not object to light us home?"

"My dear sir!" cried Pecksniff, "*I* shall be delighted. Merry, my child, the lantern."

lantern, if you please, my dear," said Martin; "
[illegible] think of taking your father out of doors to-night;
to be brief, I won't."

Mr. Pecksniff already had his hat in his hand, but it
emphatically said that he paused.

"I take Mr. Pinch, or go alone," said Martin. "
shall it be?"

"It shall be Thomas, sir," cried Pecksniff, "since y
so resolute upon it. Thomas, my friend, be very care
you please."

Tom was in some need of this injunction, for he f
nervous, and trembled to such a degree, that he found it
cult to hold the lantern. How much more difficult wh
the old man's bidding, she drew her hand through his—
Pinch's—arm!

"And so, Mr. Pinch," said Martin, on the way, "y
very comfortably situated here; are you?"

Tom answered, with even more than his usual enthu
that he was under obligations to Mr. Pecksniff which the
tion of a lifetime would but imperfectly repay.

"How long have you known my nephew?" asked Ma

"Your nephew, sir!" faltered Tom.

"Mr. Jonas Chuzzlewit," said Mary.

"Oh, dear, yes," cried Tom, greatly relieved, f
was running upon Martin. "Certainly. I never
him before to-night, sir."

"Perhaps half a lifetime will suffice for the
of *his* kindness," observed the old man.

Tom felt that this was a rebuff for him, and
understand it as a left-handed hit at his employer.
silent. Mary felt that Mr. Pinch was not
ence of mind, and that he could not say too little
ing circumstances. So *she* was silent. The
guided by what in his suspicious nature he
less and fulsome puff of Mr. Pecksniff, which was
Tom's hired service and in which he was determined
were, set him down at once for a deceitful, servile,
fawner. So *he* was silent. And though they were
ciently uncomfortable, it is fair to say that Martin was
the most so, for he had felt kindly towards Tom at
had been interested by his seeming simplicity.

"You 're like the rest," he thought, glancing at the face of the unconscious Tom. "You had nearly imposed upon me, but you have lost your labour. You 're too zealous a toad-eater, and betray yourself, Mr. Pinch."

During the whole remainder of the walk, not another word was spoken. First among the meetings to which Tom had long looked forward with a beating heart, it was memorable for nothing but embarrassment and confusion. They parted at the Dragon door; and sighing as he extinguished the candle in the lantern, Tom turned back again over the gloomy fields.

As he approached the first stile, which was in a lonely part, made very dark by a plantation of young firs, a man slipped past him and went on before. Coming to the stile he stopped, and took his seat upon it. Tom was rather startled, and for a moment stood still; but he stepped forward again immediately, and went close up to him.

It was Jonas, swinging his legs to and fro, sucking the head of a stick, and looking with a sneer at Tom.

"Good gracious me!" cried Tom; "who would have thought of its being you! You followed us, then?"

"What 's that to you?" said Jonas. "Go to the devil!"

"You are not very civil, I think," remarked Tom.

"Civil enough for *you*," retorted Jonas. "Who are you?"

"One who has as good a right to common consideration as another," said Tom mildly.

"You 're a liar," said Jonas. "You have n't a right to any consideration. You have n't a right to anything. You 're a pretty sort of fellow to talk about your rights, upon my soul! Ha, ha! — rights, too!"

"If you proceed in this way," returned Tom reddening, "you will oblige me to talk about my wrongs. But I hope your joke is over."

"It 's the way with you curs," said Mr. Jonas, "that when you know a man 's in real earnest, you pretend to think he 's joking, so that you may turn it off. But that won't do with me. It 's too stale. Now just attend to me for a bit, Mr. Pitch, or Witch, or Stitch, or whatever your name is."

"My name is Pinch," observed Tom. "Have the goodness to call me by it."

"What! You must n't even be called out of your name, must n't you!" cried Jonas. "Pauper 'prentices are looking

…p, I think. Egod, we manage 'em a little better in …ity!"

"Never mind what you do in the city," said Tom. "… have you got to say to me?"

"Just this, Mister Pinch," retorted Jonas, thrusting… face so close to Tom's that Tom was obliged to retreat a… "I advise you to keep your own counsel, and to avoid … tattle, and not to cut in where you're not wanted. … heard something of you, my friend, and your meek ways … I recommend you to forget 'em till I'm married to … Pecksniff's gals, and not to curry favour among my relat… but to leave the course clear. You know, when curs… leave the course clear, they're whipped off; so this is … advice. Do you understand? Eh? Damme, who are … cried Jonas, with increased contempt, "that you should … home with *them*, unless it was behind 'em, like any other … vant out of livery?"

"Come!" cried Tom, "I see that you had better get o… stile, and let me pursue my way home. Make room for … you please."

"Don't think it!" said Jonas, spreading himself … "Not till I choose. And I don't choose … You're afraid of my making you split upon me … bling just now, are you, Sneak?"

"I am not afraid of many things, I hope," said Tom, … certainly not of anything that you will do. I am a … bearer, and I despise all meanness. You quite mistake … Ah!" cried Tom indignantly. "Is this manly … your position to one in mine? Please to make room … pass. The less I say, the better."

"The less you say!" retorted Jonas, dangling his … more, and taking no heed of this request. "You say … little, don't you? Egod, I should like to know what … between you and a vagabond member of my family. … very little in that, too, I dare say!"

"I know no vagabond member of your family," … steadily.

"You do!" said Jonas.

"I don't," said Tom. "Your uncle's name-sake, … mean him, is no vagabond. Any comparison between … him" — Tom snapped his fingers at him, for he was … in wrath — "is unnecessarily to your disadvantage."

"Oh, indeed!" sneered Jonas. "And what do you think of his deary — his beggarly leavings, eh, Mister Pinch?"

"I don't mean to say another word, or stay here another instant," replied Tom.

"As I told you before, you're a liar," said Jonas coolly. "You'll stay here till I give you leave to go. Now keep where you are, will you!"

He flourished his stick over Tom's head; but in a moment it was spinning harmlessly in the air, and Jonas himself lay sprawling in the ditch. In the momentary struggle for the stick, Tom had brought it into violent contact with his opponent's forehead; and the blood welled out profusely from a deep cut on the temple. Tom was first apprised of this by seeing that he pressed his handkerchief to the wounded part, and staggered as he rose, being stunned.

"Are you hurt?" said Tom. "I am very sorry. Lean on me for a moment. You can do that without forgiving me, if you still bear me malice. But I don't know why; for I never offended you before we met on this spot."

He made him no answer, not appearing at first to understand him, or even to know that he was hurt, though he several times took his handkerchief from the cut to look vacantly at the blood upon it. After one of these examinations, he looked at Tom, and then there was an expression in his features, which showed that he understood what had taken place, and would remember it.

Nothing more passed between them as they went home. Jonas kept a little in advance, and Tom Pinch sadly followed, thinking of the grief which the knowledge of this quarrel must occasion his excellent benefactor. When Jonas knocked at the door, Tom's heart beat high; higher when Miss Mercy answered it, and seeing her wounded lover, shrieked aloud; higher when he followed them into the family parlour; higher than at any other time when Jonas spoke.

"Don't make a noise about it," he said. "It's nothing worth mentioning. I didn't know the road; the night's very dark; and just as I came up with Mr. Pinch" — he turned his face towards Tom, but not his eyes — "I ran against a tree. It's only skin deep."

"Cold water, Merry, my child!" cried Mr. Pecksniff. "Brown paper! Scissors! A piece of old linen! Charity, my dear, make a bandage. Bless me, Mr. Jonas!"

bother *your* nonsense," returned the gracious [illegible] law elect. "Be of some use if you can. If you can't [illegible] out!"

Miss Charity, though called upon to lend her aid, sat up in one corner, with a smile upon her face, and didn't [illegible] finger. Though Mercy laved the wound herself; and Pecksniff held the patient's head between his two hands, without that assistance it must inevitably come in half. Tom Pinch, in his guilty agitation, shook a bottle of [illegible] Drops until they were nothing but English Froth, and [illegible] other hand sustained a formidable carving-knife, really [illegible] to reduce the swelling, but apparently designed for the [illegible] infliction of another wound as soon as that was dressed; [illegible] ity rendered not the least assistance, nor uttered a word. [illegible] when Mr. Jonas's head was bound up, and he had gone [illegible] and everybody else had retired, and the house was quiet [illegible] Pinch, as he sat mournfully on his bedstead, ruminating, [illegible] a gentle tap at his door, and opening it, saw her, to [illegible] astonishment, standing before him with her finger [illegible]

"Mr. Pinch," she whispered. "Dear Mr. Pinch, [illegible] the truth! You did that? There was some [illegible] you, and you struck him? I am sure of it!"

It was the first time she had ever spoken [illegible] all the many years they had passed together. He was [illegible] with amazement.

"Was it so, or not?" she eagerly demanded.

"I was very much provoked," said Tom.

"Then it was?" cried Charity, with sparkling eyes.

"Ye-yes. We had a struggle for the path," [illegible] "But I didn't mean to hurt him so much."

"Not so much!" she repeated, [illegible] stamping her foot, to Tom's great wonder. "[illegible] It was brave of you. I honour you for it. If [illegible] quarrel again, don't spare him for the world, [illegible] down and set your shoe upon him. Not a word [illegible] anybody. Dear Mr. Pinch, I am your friend from [illegible] I am always your friend from this time."

She turned her flushed face upon Tom to [illegible] by its kindling expression, and seizing his right hand [illegible] it to her breast, and kissed it. And there was [illegible] sonal in this to render it at all embarrassing, for [illegible]

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whose power of observation was by no means remarkable, knew from the energy with which she did it that she would have fondled any hand, no matter how bedaubed or dyed, that had broken the head of Jonas Chuzzlewit.

Tom went into his room and went to bed, full of uncomfortable thoughts. That there should be any such tremendous division in the family as he knew must have taken place to convert Charity Pecksniff into his friend, for any reason, but, above all, for that which was clearly the real one; that Jonas, who had assailed him with such exceeding coarseness, should have been sufficiently magnanimous to keep the secret of their quarrel; and that any train of circumstances should have led to the commission of an assault and battery by Thomas Pinch upon any man calling himself the friend of Seth Pecksniff, were matters of such deep and painful cogitation, that he could not close his eyes. His own violence, in particular, so preyed upon the generous mind of Tom, that coupling it with the many former occasions on which he had given Mr. Pecksniff pain and anxiety (occasions of which that gentleman often reminded him), he really began to regard himself as destined by a mysterious fate to be the evil genius and bad angel of his patron. But he fell asleep at last and dreamed — new source of waking uneasiness — that he had betrayed his trust, and run away with Mary Graham.

It must be acknowledged that, asleep or awake, Tom's position in reference to this young lady was full of uneasiness. The more he saw of her, the more he admired her beauty, her intelligence, the amiable qualities that even won on the divided house of Pecksniff, and in a few days restored at all events the semblance of harmony and kindness between the angry sisters. When she spoke, Tom held his breath, so eagerly he listened; when she sang, he sat like one entranced. She touched his organ, and from that bright epoch even it, the old companion of his happiest hours, incapable as he had thought of elevation, began a new and deified existence.

God's love upon thy patience, Tom. Who that had beheld thee, for three summer weeks, poring through half the deadlong night over the jingling anatomy of that inscrutable old harpsichord in the back parlour, could have missed the entrance to thy secret heart: albeit it was dimly known to thee? Who that had seen the glow upon thy cheek when, leaning down to

[illegible]en, after hours of labour, for the sound of one [illegible] note, thou foundest that it had a voice at last, and [illegible] a flat something distantly akin to what it ought to be, — [illegible] not have known that it was destined for no common [illegible] one that smote, though gently as an angel's hand, [illegible] deepest chord within thee! And if a friendly glance — even though it were as guileless as thine own, Dear T[illegible] could but have pierced the twilight of that evening, wh[illegible] a voice well tempered to the time, sad, sweet, and [illegible] hopeful, she first sang to the altered instrument, and [illegible] at the change; and thou, sitting apart at the open [illegible] kept a glad silence and a swelling heart — must not that [illegible] have read perforce the dawning of a story, Tom, that [illegible] well for thee had never been begun!

**Tom Pinch's situation was not made the less [illegible] difficult, by the fact of no one word passing between th[illegible] reference to Martin. Honourably mindful of his [illegible] Tom gave her opportunities of all kinds. Early and [illegible] was in the church, in her favourite walks, in the [illegible] the garden, in the meadows, and in any [illegible] he might have spoken freely. But no [illegible] carefully avoided him, or never came in his [illegible] [illegible]ned. It could not be that she disliked or [illegible] by a thousand little delicate means, too [illegible] but his own, she singled him out when [illegible] and showed herself the very soul of [illegible] that she had broken with Martin, or had [illegible] affection, save in his own bold and [illegible] cheek grew red with self-reproach as he [illegible]**

All this time old Martin came and went [illegible] manner, or sat among the rest absorbed [illegible] holding little intercourse with any one. [illegible] unsocial, he was not wilful in other things, [illegible] morose, being never better pleased than when [illegible] quite [illegible] at his book, and pursued their [illegible] in his presence, unreserved. It was impossible [illegible] whom he took an interest, or whether he [illegible] any of them. Unless they spoke to him [illegible] showed that he had ears or eyes for anything that [illegible]

One day the lively Merry, sitting with [illegible] a shady tree in the churchyard, whither she had [illegible]

fatiguing herself by the imposition of sundry trials on the temper of Mr. Jonas, felt that a new shadow came between her and the sun. Raising her eyes in the expectation of seeing her betrothed, she was not a little surprised to see old Martin instead. Her surprise was not diminished when he took his seat upon the turf beside her, and opened a conversation thus: —

"When are you to be married?"

"Oh! dear Mr. Chuzzlewit, my goodness me! I'm sure I don't know. Not yet awhile, I hope."

"You hope?" said the old man.

It was very gravely said, but she took it for banter, and giggled excessively.

"Come!" said the old man, with unusual kindness, "you are young, good-looking, and I think good-natured! Frivolous you are, and love to be, undoubtedly; but you must have some heart."

"I have not given it all away, I can tell you," said Merry, nodding her head shrewdly, and plucking up the grass.

"Have you parted with any of it?"

She threw the grass about, and looked another way, but said nothing.

Martin repeated his question.

"Lor, my dear Mr. Chuzzlewit! really you must excuse me! How very odd you are."

"If it be odd in me to desire to know whether you love the young man whom I understand you are to marry, I *am* very odd," said Martin. "For that is certainly my wish."

"He 's such a monster, you know," said Merry pouting.

"Then you don't love him?" returned the old man. "Is that your meaning?"

"Why, my dear Mr. Chuzzlewit, I'm sure I tell him a hundred times a day that I hate him. You must have heard me tell him that."

"Often," said Martin.

"And so I do," cried Merry. "I do positively."

"Being at the same time engaged to marry him," observed the old man.

"Oh, yes," said Merry. "But I told the wretch — my dear Mr. Chuzzlewit, I told him when he asked me — that if I ever

marry him, it should only be that I might hate and b
r all my life."

She had a suspicion that the old man regarded Jonas w
rything but favour, and intended these remarks to be
remely captivating. He did not appear, however, to re
hem in that light by any means; for when he spoke again
was in a tone of severity.

"Look about you," he said, pointing to the graves; "
member that from your bridal hour to the day which
ou brought as low as these, and laid in such a bed, there
e no appeal against him. Think, and speak, and act,
once, like an accountable creature. Is any control put u
your inclinations? Are you forced into this match? Are
insidiously advised or tempted to contract it, by any one?
will not ask by whom — by any one?"

"No," said Merry, shrugging her shoulders. "I d
know that I am."

"Don't know that you are! Are you!"

"No," replied Merry. "Nobody ever said anything t
about it. If any one had tried to make me
would n't have had him at all."

"I am told that he was at first supposed to
admirer," said Martin.

"Oh, good gracious! My dear Mr. Chuzzlewit
very hard to make him, though he is a natural
for other people's vanity," said Merry. "
Cherry is the vainest darling!"

"It was her mistake then!"

"I hope it was," cried Merry. "But, all
child has been so dreadfully jealous and
my word and honour, it 's impossible to
no use trying."

"Not forced, persuaded, or controlled," said Martin
fully. "And that 's true, I see. There
You may have lapsed into this engagement
It may have been the wanton act of a light heart
no!"

"My dear Mr. Chuzzlewit," simpered Merry, "
headstrong, there never was such a feather
It 's a perfect balloon, I declare! You never
He waited quietly till she had finished, and

steadily and slowly, and in a softened voice, as if he would still invite her confidence: —

"Have you any wish — or is there anything within your breast that whispers you may form the wish, if you have time to think — to be released from this engagement?"

Again Miss Merry pouted, and looked down, and plucked the grass, and shrugged her shoulders. No. She did n't know that she had. She was pretty sure she had n't. Quite sure, she might say. She "did n't mind it."

"Has it ever occurred to you," said Martin, "that your married life may perhaps be miserable, full of bitterness, and most unhappy?"

Merry looked down again; and now she tore the grass up by the roots.

"My dear Mr. Chuzzlewit, what shocking words! Of course, I shall quarrel with him; I should quarrel with any husband. Married people always quarrel, I believe. But as to being miserable, and bitter, and all those dreadful things, you know, why I could n't be absolutely that, unless he always had the best of it; and I mean to have the best of it myself. I always do now," cried Merry, nodding her head, and giggling very much; "for I make a perfect slave of the creature."

"Let it go on," said Martin rising. "Let it go on! I sought to know your mind, my dear, and you have shown it me. I wish you joy. Joy!" he repeated, looking full upon her, and pointing to the wicket-gate where Jonas entered at the moment. And then, without waiting for his nephew, he passed out at another gate, and went away.

"Oh, you terrible old man!" cried the facetious Merry to herself. "What a perfectly hideous monster to be wandering about churchyards in the broad daylight, frightening people out of their wits! Don't come here, Griffin, or I 'll go away directly."

Mr. Jonas was the Griffin. He sat down upon the grass at her side, in spite of this warning, and sulkily inquired: —

"What 's my uncle been a talking about?"

"About you," rejoined Merry. "He says you 're not half good enough for me."

"Oh, yes, I dare say! We all know that. He means to give you some present worth having, I hope. Did he say anything that looked like it?"

…e did n't!" cried Merry most decisively.

…a stingy old dog he is," said Jonas. "Well!"

…Griffin!" cried Miss Mercy, in counterfeit …

…nat are you doing, Griffin?"

"Only giving you a squeeze," said the discomfited Jo…

…here 's no harm in that, I suppose?"

"But there is a great deal of harm in it, if I don't …greeable," returned his cousin. "Do go along, will y… …u make me so hot!"

Mr. Jonas withdrew his arm, and for a moment looked … more like a murderer than a lover. But he cleared … ow by degrees, and broke silence with: —

"I say, Mel!"

"What do you say, you vulgar thing — you low …" cried his fair betrothed.

"When is it to be? I can't afford to go on dawdling a… here half my life, I need n't tell you, and Pecksniff says … father 's being so lately dead makes very little odds, for … can be married as quiet as we please down here, and … lonely is a good reason to the neighbours for … home so soon, especially one that he knows … (my uncle, I mean), he 's sure not to put … wheel, whatever we settle on, for he told P… morning, that if *you* liked it, he 'd nothing at … Mel," said Jonas, venturing on another …, "… it be?"

"Upon my word!" cried Merry.

"Upon my soul, if you like," said Jonas. "W… say to next week, now?"

"To next week! If you had said next quarter … have wondered at your impudence."

"But I did n't say next quarter," retorted J… next week."

"Then, Griffin," cried Miss Merry, pushing … rising. "I say no! not next week. It shan't be … — and I may not choose it to be for months. There!"

He glanced up at her from the ground, … he had looked at Tom Pinch, but held his …

"No fright of a Griffin with a patch over his eye, … tate to me, or have a voice in the matter," … "There!"

Still Mr. Jonas held his peace.

"If it 's next month, that shall be the very earliest; but I won't say when it shall be till to-morrow; and if you don't like that, it shall never be at all," said Merry; "and if you follow me about and won't leave me alone, it shall never be at all. There! And if you don't do everything I order you to do, it shall never be at all. So don't follow me. There, Griffin!"

And with that, she skipped away, among the trees.

"Ecod, my lady!" said Jonas, looking after her, and biting a piece of straw, almost to powder; "you 'll catch it for this, when you *are* married! It 's all very well now — it keeps one on, somehow, and you know it — but I 'll pay you off scot and lot by and by. This is a plaguy dull sort of a place for a man to be sitting by himself in. I never could abide a mouldy old churchyard."

As he turned into the avenue himself, Miss Merry, who was far ahead, happened to look back.

"Ah!" said Jonas, with a sullen smile, and a nod that was not addressed to her; "make the most of it while it lasts. Get in your hay while the sun shines. Take your own way as long as it 's in your power, my lady!"

# CHAPTER XXV

**IS IN PART PROFESSIONAL: AND FURNISHES THE READER WITH SOME VALUABLE HINTS IN RELATION TO THE MANAGEMENT OF A SICK CHAMBER.**

Mr. Mould was surrounded by his household gods. He was enjoying the sweets of domestic repose, and gazing on them with a calm delight. The day being sultry, and the window open, the legs of Mr. Mould were on the window-seat, and his back reclined against the shutter. Over his shining head a handkerchief was drawn, to guard his baldness from the flies. The room was fragrant with the smell of punch, a tumbler of which grateful compound stood upon a small round table, convenient to the hand of Mr. Mould; so deftly mixed, that, as his eye looked down into the cool transparent drink, another eye, peering brightly from behind the crisp lemon-peel, looked up at him, and twinkled like a star.

Deep in the city, and within the ward of Cheap, stood Mr. Mould's establishment. His Harem, or, in other words the common sitting-room of Mrs. Mould and family, was at the back, over the little counting-house behind the shop; abutting on a churchyard, small and shady. In this domestic chamber Mr. Mould now sat; gazing, a placid man, upon his rural home. If, for a moment at a time, he sought a wider prospect, whence he might return with freshened zest to these enjoyments, his moist glance wandered like a sunbeam through a rural screen of scarlet runners, trained on strings before the window, and he looked down, with an artist's eye, upon the graves.

The partner of his life, and daughters twain, were Mr. Mould's companions. Plump as any partridge was each Miss Mould, and Mrs. M. was plumper than the two together. So round and chubby were their fair proportions, that they might have been the bodies once belonging to the angels' faces in the shop below, grown up, with other heads attached to make

mortal. Even their peachy cheeks were puffed out and distended, as though they ought of right to be performing on celestial trumpets. The bodiless cherubs in the shop, who were depicted as constantly blowing those instruments for ever and ever without any lungs, played, it is to be presumed, entirely by ear.

Mr. Mould looked lovingly at Mrs. Mould, who sat hard by, and was a helpmate to him in his punch as in all other things. Each seraph daughter, too, enjoyed her share of his regards, and smiled upon him in return. So bountiful were Mr. Mould's possessions, and so large his stock in trade, that even there, within his household sanctuary, stood a cumbrous press, whose mahogany maw was filled with shrouds, and winding-sheets, and other furniture of funerals. But though the Misses Mould had been brought up, as one may say, beneath his eye, it had cast no shadow on their timid infancy or blooming youth. Sporting behind the scenes of death and burial from cradlehood, the Misses Mould knew better. Hat-bands, to them, were but so many yards of silk or crape; the final robe but such a quantity of linen. The Misses Mould could idealise a player's habit, or a court-lady's petticoat, or even an act of parliament. But they were not to be taken in by palls. They made them sometimes.

The premises of Mr. Mould were hard of hearing to the boisterous noises in the great main streets, and nestled in a quiet corner, where the city strife became a drowsy hum, that sometimes rose and sometimes fell and sometimes altogether ceased; suggesting to a thoughtful mind a stoppage in Cheapside. The light came sparkling in among the scarlet runners, as if the churchyard winked at Mr. Mould, and said, "We understand each other;" and from the distant shop a pleasant sound arose of coffin-making with a low melodious hammer, rat, tat, tat, tat, alike promoting slumber and digestion.

"Quite the buzz of insects," said Mr. Mould, closing his eyes in a perfect luxury. "It puts one in mind of the sound of animated nature in the agricultural districts. It 's exactly like the woodpecker tapping."

"The woodpecker tapping the hollow *elm* tree," observed Mrs. Mould, adapting the words of the popular melody to the description of wood commonly used in the trade.

"Ha, ha!" laughed Mr. Mould. "Not at all bad, my dear.

[illegible] glad to hear from you again, Mrs. M. Hol[illegible] tree, eh? Ha, ha! Very good, indeed. I've seen w[illegible] n that in the Sunday papers, my love."

Mrs. Mould, thus encouraged, took a little more of [illegible] ch, and handed it to her daughters, who dutifully follo[illegible] example of their mother.

"Hollow *elm* tree, eh?" said Mr. Mould, making a sl[illegible] ntion with his legs in his enjoyment of the joke. "I [illegible] ch in the song. Elm, eh? Yes, to be sure. Ha, ha, [illegible] pon my soul, that's one of the best things I know!"

was so excessively tickled by the jest that he could n't fo[illegible] but repeated twenty times, "Elm, eh? Yes, to be s[illegible] n, of course. Ha, ha, ha! Upon my life, you know, [illegible] ought to be sent to somebody who could make use of it. [illegible] one of the smartest things that ever was said. Hollow [illegible] tree, eh? Of course. Very hollow. Ha, ha, ha!"

Here a knock was heard at the room door.

"That's Tacker, *I* know," said Mrs. Mould, "by the wh[illegible] ing he makes. Who that hears him now would suppose h[illegible] ever had wind enough to carry the feathers [illegible] Come in, Tacker."

"Beg your pardon, ma'am," said Tacker, [illegible] way. "I thought our governor was here."

"Well! so he is," cried Mould.

"Oh! I did n't see you, I'm sure," said Tacker [illegible] a little further. "You would n't be inclined to [illegible] one of two, with the plain wood and a tin plate. [illegible]

"Certainly not," replied Mr. Mould, "[illegible] Nothing to say to it."

"I told 'em it was precious low," observed Mr. Tacker.

"Tell 'em to go somewhere else. We [illegible] business here," said Mr. Mould. "Like their [illegible] propose it. Who is it?"

"Why," returned Tacker pausing, "that's where [illegible] see. It's the beadle's son-in-law."

"The beadle's son-in-law, eh?" said Mould. "Well! do it if the beadle follows in his cocked hat [illegible] may carry it off that way, by looking official, but it [illegible] enough then. His cocked hat, mind!"

"I'll take care, sir," rejoined Tacker. "Oh! Mrs. Gam[illegible] below, and wants to speak to you."

"Tell Mrs. Gamp to come up stairs," said Mould. "Now, Mrs. Gamp, what 's *your* news?"

The lady in question was by this time in the doorway, curtseying to Mrs. Mould. At the same moment, a peculiar fragrance was borne upon the breeze, as if a passing fairy had hiccoughed, and had previously been to a wine vault.

Mrs. Gamp made no response to Mr. Mould, but curtseyed to Mrs. Mould again, and held up her hands and eyes, as in a devout thanksgiving that she looked so well. She was neatly, but not gaudily attired, in the weeds she had worn when Mr. Pecksniff had the pleasure of making her acquaintance; and was perhaps the turning of a scale more snuffy.

"There are some happy creeturs," Mrs. Gamp observed, "as time runs back'ards with, and you are one, Mrs. Mould; not that he need do nothing except use you in his most owldacious way for years to come, I 'm sure; for young you are and will be. I says to Mrs. Harris," Mrs. Gamp continued, "only t' other day; the last Monday evening fortnight as ever dawned upon this Piljian's Projiss of a mortal wale; I says to Mrs. Harris when she says to me, 'Years and our trials, Mrs. Gamp, sets marks upon us all,' — 'Say not the words, Mrs. Harris, if you and me is to continual friends, for sech is not the case. Mrs. Mould,' I says, making so free, I will confess, as use the name" (she curtseyed here), "'is one of them that goes agen the observation straight; and never, Mrs. Harris, whilst I 've a drop of breath to draw, will I set by, and not stand up, don't think it.' — 'I ast your pardon, ma'am,' says Mrs. Harris, 'and I humbly grant your grace; for if ever a woman lived as would see her feller creeturs into fits to serve her friends, well do I know that woman 's name is Sairey Gamp.'"

At this point she was fain to stop for breath; and advantage may be taken of the circumstance to state that a fearful mystery surrounded this lady of the name of Harris, whom no one in the circle of Mrs. Gamp's acquaintance had ever seen; neither did any human being know her place of residence, though Mrs. Gamp appeared on her own showing to be in constant communication with her. There were conflicting rumours on the subject; but the prevalent opinion was that she was a phantom of Mrs. Gamp's brain — as Messrs. Doe and Roe are fictions of the law — created for the express purpose of

holding visionary dialogues with her on all manner of subjects, and invariably winding up with a compliment to the excellence of her nature.

"And likeways what a pleasure," said Mrs. Gamp, turning with a tearful smile towards the daughters, "to see them two young ladies as I knowed afore a tooth in their pretty heads was cut, and have many a day seen — ah, the sweet creeturs! — playing at berryin's down in the shop, and follerin' the order-book to its long home in the iron safe! But that 's all past and over, Mr. Mould;" as she thus got in a carefully regulated routine to that gentleman, she shook her head waggishly; "that 's all past and over now, sir, ain't it?"

"Changes, Mrs. Gamp, changes!" returned the undertaker.

"More changes too, to come, afore we 've done with changes, sir," said Mrs. Gamp, nodding yet more waggishly than before. "Young ladies with such faces thinks of something else besides berryin's, don't they, sir?"

"I am sure I don't know, Mrs. Gamp," said Mould with a chuckle. — "Not bad in Mrs. Gamp, my dear!"

"Oh, yes, you do know, sir!" said Mrs. Gamp, "and so does Mrs. Mould, your 'ansome pardner, too, sir; and so do I, although the blessing of a daughter was deniged me; which, if we had had one, Gamp would certainly have drunk its little shoes right off its feet, as with our precious boy he did, and arterwards send the child a errand to sell his wooden leg for any money it would fetch as matches in the rough, and bring it home in liquor; which was truly done beyond his years, for ev'ry individgle penny that child lost at toss or buy for kidney ones; and come home arterwards quite bold, to break the news, and offering to drown himself if sech would be a satisfaction to his parents. — Oh, yes, you do know, sir," said Mrs. Gamp, wiping her eye with her shawl, and resuming the thread of her discourse. "There 's something besides births and berryin's in the newspapers, ain't there, Mr. Mould?"

Mr. Mould winked at Mrs. Mould, whom he had by this time taken on his knee, and said, "No doubt. A good deal more, Mrs. Gamp. Upon my life, Mrs. Gamp is very far from bad, my dear!"

"There 's marryings, ain't there, sir?" said Mrs. Gamp, while both the daughters blushed and tittered. "Bless their precious hearts, and well they knows it! Well you knowed it,

too, and well did Mrs. Mould, when you was at their time of life! But my opinion is, you 're all of one age now. For as to you and Mrs. Mould, sir, ever having grandchildren — "

"Oh! Fie, fie! Nonsense, Mrs. Gamp," replied the undertaker. "Devilish smart, though. Ca-pi-tal!" — this was in a whisper. "My dear — " aloud again — "Mrs. Gamp can drink a glass of rum, I dare say. Sit down, Mrs. Gamp, sit down."

Mrs. Gamp took the chair that was nearest the door, and, casting up her eyes towards the ceiling, feigned to be wholly insensible to the fact of a glass of rum being in preparation, until it was placed in her hand by one of the young ladies, when she exhibited the greatest surprise.

"A thing," she said, "as hardly ever, Mrs. Mould, occurs with me unless it is when I am indispoged, and find my half a pint of porter settling heavy on the chest. Mrs. Harris often and often says to me, 'Sairey Gamp,' she says, 'you raly do amaze me!' 'Mrs. Harris,' I says to her, 'why so? Give it a name, I beg.' 'Telling the truth then, ma'am,' says Mrs. Harris, 'and shaming him as shall be nameless betwixt you and me, never did I think till I knowed you, as any woman could sick-nurse and monthly likeways, on the little that you takes to drink.' 'Mrs. Harris,' I says to her, 'none on us knows what we can do till we tries; and wunst, when me and Gamp kept 'ouse, I thought so, too. But now,' I says, 'my half a pint of porter fully satisfies; perwisin', Mrs. Harris, that it is brought reg'lar, and drawed mild. Whether I sicks or monthlies, ma'am, I hope I does my duty, but I am but a poor woman, and I earns my living hard; therefore I *do* require it, which I makes confession, to be brought reg'lar and drawed mild.'"

The precise connection between these observations and the glass of rum did not appear; for Mrs. Gamp proposing as a toast "The best of lucks to all!" took off the dram in quite a scientific manner, without any further remarks.

"And what 's your news, Mrs. Gamp?" asked Mould again, as that lady wiped her lips upon her shawl, and nibbled a corner off a soft biscuit, which she appeared to carry in her pocket as a provision against contingent drams. "How 's Mr. Chuffey?"

"Mr. Chuffey, sir," she replied, "is jest as usual; he ain't

d he ain't no worse. I take it very kind in the
an to have wrote up to you and said, 'Let Mrs. Gamp
re of him till I come home;' but ev'rythink he do
d. There ain't a many like him. If there was, we
n't want no churches."

t do you want to speak to me about, Mrs. Gamp?"
uld, coming to the point.

this, sir," Mrs. Gamp returned, "with thanks to you
king. There *is* a gent, sir, at the Bull in Holborn, as
een took ill there, and is bad abed. They have a day
as was recommended from Bartholomew's; and well I
her, Mr. Mould, her name bein' Mrs. Prig, the best of
rs. But she is otherways engaged at night, and they are
nts of night-watching; consequent she says to them, have
reposed the greatest friendliness in me for twenty years.
The soberest person going, and the best of blessings in a sick
room, is Mrs. Gamp. Send a boy to Kingsgate Street,' she
says, 'and snap her up at any price, for Mrs. Gamp is worth
her weight and more in goldian guineas.' My landlord brings
the message down to me, and says, 'Bein' in a [illegible]
where you are, and this job promising so well, why [illegible]
the two?' 'No sir,' I says, 'not unbeknown to Mr. M[illegible]
and therefore do not think it. But I will go to Mr. M[illegible]
I says, 'and ast him, if you like.'" Here she [illegible]
ways at the undertaker, and came to a stop.

"Night-watching, eh?" said Mould, rubbing his [illegible]

"From eight o'clock till eight, sir, I will not [illegible]
Mrs. Gamp rejoined.

"And then go back, eh?" said Mould.

"Quite free then, sir, to attend to Mr. Chuffey. His ways
bein' quiet, and his hours early, he'd be abed, [illegible]
the time. I will not deny," said Mrs. Gamp with meekness,
"that I am but a poor woman, and that the money is [illegible]
but do not let that act upon you, Mr. Mould. [illegible]
ride on camels, but it ain't so easy for 'em to [illegible]
needle's eye. That is my comfort, and I hope I [illegible]

"Well, Mrs. Gamp," observed Mould, "I [illegible]
particular [illegible] to your earning an honest penny [illegible]
[illegible] I should keep it quiet, I think, Mrs. [illegible]
I [illegible] mention it to Mr. Chuzzlewit on his [illegible]
[illegible] it were necessary, or he asked you point [illegible]

"The very words was on my lips, sir," Mrs. Gamp rejoined. "Suppoging that the gent should die, I hope I might take the liberty of saying as I know'd some one in the undertaking line, and yet give no offence to you, sir?"

"Certainly, Mrs. Gamp," said Mould, with much condescension. "You may casually remark, in such a case, that we do the thing pleasantly and in a great variety of styles, and are generally considered to make it as agreeable as possible to the feelings of the survivors. But don't obtrude it — don't obtrude it. Easy, easy! My dear, you may as well give Mrs. Gamp a card or two, if you please."

Mrs. Gamp received them, and scenting no more rum in the wind (for the bottle was locked up again) rose to take her departure.

"Wishing ev'ry happiness to this happy family," said Mrs. Gamp, "with all my heart. Good arternoon, Mrs. Mould! If I was Mr. Mould, I should be jealous of you, ma'am; and I 'm sure if I was you, I should be jealous of Mr. Mould."

"Tut, tut! Bah, bah! Go along, Mrs. Gamp!" cried the delighted undertaker.

"As to the young ladies," said Mrs. Gamp, dropping a curtsey, "bless their sweet looks — how they can ever reconsize it with their duties to be so grown up with such young parents, it ain't for sech as me to give a guess at."

"Nonsense, nonsense. Be off, Mrs. Gamp!" cried Mould. But in the height of his gratification, he actually pinched Mrs. Mould as he said it.

"I 'll tell you what, my dear," he observed, when Mrs. Gamp had at last withdrawn and shut the door, "that 's a ve-ry shrewd woman. That 's a woman whose intellect is immensely superior to her station in life. That 's a woman who observes and reflects in an uncommon manner. She 's the sort of woman, now," said Mould, drawing his silk handkerchief over his head again, and composing himself for a nap, "one would almost feel disposed to bury for nothing, and do it neatly, too!"

Mrs. Mould and her daughters fully concurred in these remarks; the subject of which had by this time reached the street, where she experienced so much inconvenience from the air, that she was obliged to stand under an archway for a short time to recover herself. Even after this precaution, she

and then persuading poor old Chuffey to betake himse
she sallied forth upon her new engagement. First,
to her private lodgings in Kingsgate Street, for a
robes and wrappings comfortable in the
repaired to the Bull in Holborn, which she rea
clocks were striking eight.

As she turned into the yard, she stopped; for the
landlady, and head chambermaid were all on the
together, talking earnestly with a young gentleman w
to have just come or to be just going away. The
that struck upon Mrs. Gamp's ear obviously bore
the patient; and it being expedient that all good
should know as much as possible about the cases on w
skill is brought to bear, Mrs. Gamp listened as a
duty.

"No better, then?" observed the gentleman.

"Worse!" said the landlord.

"Much worse," added the landlady.

"Oh! a deal badder," cried the chambermaid from
ground, opening her eyes very wide, and shaking

"Poor fellow!" said the gentleman, "I am sorry
The worst of it is, that I have no idea what fr
tions he has, or where they live, except that it certa
in London."

time I have only met him twice. On both occasions I was in London for a boy's holiday (having come up for a week or so from Wiltshire), and lost sight of him again directly. The letter bearing my name and address which you found upon his table, and which led to your applying to me, is in answer, you will observe, to one he wrote from this house the very day he was taken ill, making an appointment with him at his own request. Here is his letter, if you wish to see it."

The landlord read it; the landlady looked over him. The chambermaid, in the background, made out as much of it as she could, and invented the rest; believing it all from that time forth as a positive piece of evidence.

"He has very little luggage, you say?" observed the gentleman, who was no other than our old friend, John Westlock.

"Nothing but a portmanteau," said the landlord; "and very little in it."

"A few pounds in his purse, though?"

"Yes. It 's sealed up, and in the cash-box. I made a memorandum of the amount, which you 're welcome to see."

"Well!" said John, "as the medical gentleman says the fever must take its course, and nothing can be done just now beyond giving him his drinks regularly and having him carefully attended to, nothing more can be said that I know of, until he is in a condition to give us some information. Can you suggest anything else?"

"N-no," replied the landlord, "except —"

"Except, who 's to pay, I suppose?" said John.

"Why," hesitated the landlord, "it would be as well."

"Quite as well," said the landlady.

"Not forgetting to remember the servants," said the chambermaid in a bland whisper.

"It is but reasonable, I fully admit," said John Westlock. "At all events, you have the stock in hand to go upon for the present; and I will readily undertake to pay the doctor and the nurses."

"Ah!" cried Mrs. Gamp. "A rayal gentleman!"

She groaned her admiration so audibly that they all turned round. Mrs. Gamp felt the necessity of advancing, bundle in hand, and introducing herself.

"The night-nurse," she observed, "from Kingsgate Street, well beknown to Mrs. Prig the day-nurse, and the best of crec-

w is the poor dear gentleman to-night? If he [illegible] better yet, still that is what must be expected and prep[illegible]

It ain't the fust time by a many score, ma'am," drop[illegible] curtsey to the landlady, "that Mrs. Prig and me has n[illegible] her, turn and turn about, one off, one on. We kn[illegible] other's ways, and often gives relief when others fail. [illegible] charges is but low, sir" — Mrs. Gamp addressed hersel[illegible] John on this head — "considerin' the nater of our painful d[illegible] if they wos made accordin' to our wishes, they would be [illegible] paid."

Regarding herself as having now delivered her inaugur[illegible] address, Mrs. Gamp curtseyed all round, and signified her [illegible] to be conducted to the scene of her official duties. The c[illegible] bermaid led her, through a variety of intricate passages, to [illegible] top of the house; and pointing at length to a solitary do[illegible] the end of a gallery, informed her that yonder was the cha[illegible] where the patient lay. That done, she hurried off with al[illegible] speed she could make.

Mrs. Gamp traversed the gallery in a great heat from h[illegible] carried her large bundle up so many stairs, and [illegible] door, which was immediately opened by Mrs. Prig [illegible] and shawled, and all impatience to be gone. Mrs. Prig [illegible] the Gamp build, but not so fat; and her [illegible] more like a man's. She had also a beard.

"I began to think you warn't a coming!" Mrs. Pr[illegible] served, in some displeasure.

"It shall be made good to-morrow night," said Mrs. [illegible] "[illegible]. I had to go and fetch my things." [illegible] began to make signs of enquiry in reference to [illegible] the patient and his overhearing them — for there was [illegible] before the door — when Mrs. Prig settled that [illegible]

"Oh!" she said aloud, "he's quiet, but his wits [illegible] It ain't no matter what you say."

"Anythin' to tell afore you goes, my dear?" [illegible] Gamp, setting her bundle down inside the door, and [illegible] affectionately at her partner.

"The pickled salmon," Mrs. Prig replied, "[illegible] I can partick'ler recommend it. Don't have [illegible] cold meat, for it tastes of the stable. [illegible] all good."

Mrs. Gamp expressed herself much gratified.

"The physic and them things is on the drawers and mankle-shelf," said Mrs. Prig cursorily. "He took his last slime draught at seven. The easy-chair ain't soft enough. You 'll want his piller."

Mrs. Gamp thanked her for these hints, and giving her a friendly good night, held the door open until she had disappeared at the other end of the gallery. Having thus performed the hospitable duty of seeing her safely off, she shut it, locked it on the inside, took up her bundle, walked round the screen, and entered on her occupation of the sick chamber.

"A little dull, but not so bad as might be," Mrs. Gamp remarked. "I 'm glad to see a parapidge, in case of fire, and lots of roofs and chimley-pots to walk upon."

It will be seen from these remarks that Mrs. Gamp was looking out of window. When she had exhausted the prospect, she tried the easy-chair, which she indignantly declared was "harder than a brickbadge." Next she pursued her researches among the physic-bottles, glasses, jugs, and tea-cups; and when she had entirely satisfied her curiosity on all these subjects of investigation, she untied her bonnet-strings and strolled up to the bedside to take a look at the patient.

A young man — dark and not ill-looking — with long black hair, that seemed the blacker for the whiteness of the bed-clothes. His eyes were partly open, and he never ceased to roll his head from side to side upon the pillow, keeping his body almost quiet. He did not utter words; but every now and then gave vent to an expression of impatience or fatigue, sometimes of surprise; and still his restless head — oh, weary, weary hour! — went to and fro without a moment's intermission.

Mrs. Gamp solaced herself with a pinch of snuff, and stood looking at him with her head inclined a little sideways, as a connoisseur might gaze upon a doubtful work of art. By degrees, a horrible remembrance of one branch of her calling took possession of the woman; and stooping down, she pinned his wandering arms against his sides, to see how he would look if laid out as a dead man. Her fingers itched to compose his limbs in that last marble attitude.

"Ah!" said Mrs. Gamp, walking away from the bed, "he 'd make a lovely corpse!"

She now proceeded to unpack her bundle; lighted a candle with the aid of a fire-box on the drawers; filled a small kettle,

eliminary to refreshing herself with a cup of tea in the f the night; laid what she called "a little bit of fire" same philanthropic purpose; and also set forth a small n, that nothing might be wanting for her comfortable ent. These preparations occupied so long, that when ere brought to a conclusion it was high time to think upper; so she rang the bell and ordered it.

hink, young woman," said Mrs. Gamp to the assistant rmaid, in a tone expressive of weakness, "that I could little bit of pickled salmon, with a nice little sprig of s, and a sprinkling of white pepper. I takes new bread, ar, with just a little pat of fresh butter, and a mossel of . In case there should be such a thing as a cowcumber 'ouse, will you be so kind as bring it, for I'm rather al to 'em, and they does a world of good in a sick room. ey draws the Brighton Tipper here, I takes *that* ale at night, my love; it bein' considered wakeful by the doctors. And whatever you do, young woman, don't bring more than a shilling's worth of gin-and-water warm when I rings the bell a second time; for that is always my all[illegible] takes a drop beyond!"

Having preferred these moderate requests, Mrs. [illegible] served that she would stand at the door until [illegible] executed, to the end that the patient might [illegible] by her opening it a second time; and therefore [illegible] the young woman to "look sharp."

A tray was brought with everything upon [illegible] cucumber, and Mrs. Gamp accordingly sat [illegible] drink in high good humour. The extent to w[illegible] herself of the vinegar, and supped up that refre[illegible] the blade of her knife, can scarcely be expressed [illegible]

"Ah!" [illegible] Mrs. Gamp, as she meditated [illegible] shilling's worth, "what a blessed thing it is — [illegible] — to be [illegible]! What a blessed thing it [illegible] people happy in their beds, and never mind [illegible] [illegible] I don't believe [illegible] [illegible] I never see [illegible]"

S[illegible] in the same vein until her [illegible] [illegible] the patient's medicine, [illegible] pr[illegible] with hopes to make him [illegible] diately [illegible] his throat

"I a'most forgot the piller, I declare!" said Mrs. Gamp, drawing it away. "There! Now he 's comfortable as he can be, *I* 'm sure! I must try to make myself as much so as I can."

With this view she went about the construction of an extemporaneous bed in the easy-chair, with the addition of the next easy one for her feet. Having formed the best couch that the circumstances admitted of, she took out of her bundle a yellow nightcap of prodigious size, in shape resembling a cabbage; which article of dress she fixed and tied on with the utmost care, previously divesting herself of a row of bald old curls that could scarcely be called false, they were so very innocent of anything approaching to deception. From the same repository she brought forth a night-jacket, in which she also attired herself. Finally, she produced a watchman's coat, which she tied round her neck by the sleeves, so that she became two people; and looked, behind, as if she were in the act of being embraced by one of the old patrol.

All these arrangements made, she lighted the rushlight, coiled herself up on her couch, and went to sleep. Ghostly and dark the room became, and full of lowering shadows. The distant noises in the streets were gradually hushed; the house was quiet as a sepulchre; the dead of night was coffined in the silent city.

Oh, weary, weary hour! Oh, haggard mind, groping darkly through the past; incapable of detaching itself from the miserable present; dragging its heavy chain of care through imaginary feasts and revels, and scenes of awful pomp; seeking but a moment's rest among the long-forgotten haunts of childhood, and the resorts of yesterday, and dimly finding fear and horror everywhere! Oh, weary, weary hour. What were the wanderings of Cain to these!

Still, without a moment's interval, the burning head tossed to and fro. Still, from time to time, fatigue, impatience, suffering, and surprise, found utterance upon that rack, and plainly too, though never once in words. At length, in the solemn hour of midnight, he began to talk; waiting awfully for answers sometimes, as though invisible companions were about his bed, and so replying to their speech and questioning again.

Mrs. Gamp awoke, and sat up in her bed; presenting on the

wall the shadow of a gigantic night constable, struggling with a prisoner.

"Come! Hold your tongue!" she cried, in sharp reproof. "Don't make none of that noise here."

There was no alteration in the face, or in the incessant motion of the head, but he talked on wildly.

"Ah!" said Mrs. Gamp, coming out of the chair with an impatient shiver; "I thought I was a sleepin' too pleasant to last! The devil's in the night, I think, it's turned so chilly."

"Don't drink so much!" cried the sick man. "You'll ruin us all. Don't you see how the fountain sinks? Look at the mark where the sparkling water was just now!"

"Sparkling water indeed!" said Mrs. Gamp. "I'll have a sparkling cup o' tea, I think. I wish you'd hold your noise!"

He burst into a laugh, which, being prolonged, fell off into a dismal wail. Checking himself, with fierce inconstancy he began to count — fast.

"One — two — three — four — five — six."

"'One, two, buckle my shoe,'" said Mrs. Gamp, who was now on her knees, lighting the fire, "'three, four, shut the door,' — I wish you'd shut your mouth, young man — 'five, six, picking up sticks.' If I'd got a few handy, I should have the kettle biling all the sooner."

Awaiting this desirable consummation, she sat down so close to the fender (which was a high one) that her nose rested upon it; and for some time she drowsily amused herself by sliding that feature backwards and forwards along the brass top, as far as she could, without changing her position to do it. She maintained, all the while, a running commentary upon the wanderings of the man in bed.

"That makes five hundred and twenty-one men, all dressed alike, and with the same distortion on their faces, that have passed in at the window, and out at the door," he cried anxiously. "Look there! Five hundred and twenty-two — twenty-three — twenty-four. Do you see them?"

"Ah! *I* see 'em," said Mrs. Gamp; "all the whole kit of 'em numbered like hackney-coaches — ain't they?"

"Touch me! Let me be sure of this. Touch me!"

"You'll take your next draught when I've made the kettle

bile," retorted Mrs. Gamp composedly, "and you 'll be touched then. You 'll be touched up, too, if you don't take it quiet."

"Five hundred and twenty-eight, five hundred and twenty-nine, five hundred and thirty. — Look here!"

"What 's the matter now?" said Mrs. Gamp.

"They 're coming four abreast, each man with his arm entwined in the next man's, and his hand upon his shoulder. What 's that upon the arm of every man, and on the flag?"

"Spiders, p'raps," said Mrs. Gamp.

"Crape! Black crape! Good God! why do they wear it outside?"

"Would you have 'em carry black crape in their insides?" Mrs. Gamp retorted. "Hold your noise, hold your noise."

The fire beginning by this time to impart a grateful warmth, Mrs. Gamp became silent; gradually rubbed her nose more and more slowly along the top of the fender; and fell into a heavy doze. She was awakened by the room ringing (as she fancied) with a name she knew: —

"Chuzzlewit!"

The sound was so distinct and real, and so full of agonised entreaty, that Mrs. Gamp jumped up in terror, and ran to the door. She expected to find the passage filled with people, come to tell her that the house in the city had taken fire. But the place was empty; not a soul was there. She opened the window and looked out. Dark, dull, dingy, and desolate house-tops. As she passed to her seat again, she glanced at the patient. Just the same; but silent. Mrs. Gamp was so warm now that she threw off the watchman's coat and fanned herself.

"It seemed to make the wery bottles ring," she said. "What could I have been a dreaming of? That dratted Chuffey, I 'll be bound."

The supposition was probable enough. At any rate, a pinch of snuff, and the song of the steaming kettle, quite restored the tone of Mrs. Gamp's nerves, which were none of the weakest. She brewed her tea; made some buttered toast; and sat down at the tea-board, with her face to the fire.

When once again, in a tone more terrible than that which had vibrated in her slumbering ear, these words were shrieked out: —

"Chuzzlewit! Jonas! No!"

amp dropped the cup she was in the act of raisin
and turned round with a start that made the little
ap. The cry had come from the bed.

It wa bright morning the next time Mrs. Gamp looked
window, and the sun was rising cheerfully. Lighter
hter grew the sky, and noisier the streets; and high into
ummer air uprose the smoke of newly kindled fires,
busy day was broad awake.

Mrs. Prig relieved punctually, having passed a good n
t her other patient's. Mr. Westlock came at the same t
it he was not admitted, the disorder being infectious.
octor came too. The doctor shook his head. It was all
could do, under the circumstances, and he did it well.

"What sort of a night, nurse?"

"Restless, sir," said Mrs. Gamp.

"Talk much?"

"Middling, sir," said Mrs. Gamp.

"Nothing to the purpose, I suppose?"

"Oh, bless you no, sir. Only jargon."

"Well!" said the doctor, "we must keep him quiet
the room cool, give him his draughts regularly, and
he's carefully looked to. That's all!"

"And as long as Mrs. Prig and me waits upon him,
fear of that," said Mrs. Gamp.

"I suppose," observed Mrs. Prig, when they had
the doctor out, "there's nothin' now?"

"Nothin' at all, my dear," said Mrs. Gamp. "He
wearin' on his talk from making up a list of
you needn't mind him."

"Oh, I shan't mind him," Mrs. Prig returned. "I
somethin' else to think of."

"I pays my debts to-night, you know, my dear,
afore my time," said Mrs. Gamp. "But Betsy Prig,"
speaking with great feeling, and laying her hand upon her
— "try the cowcumbers, God bless you!"

## CHAPTER XXVI

### AN UNEXPECTED MEETING, AND A PROMISING PROSPECT.

THE laws of sympathy between beards and birds, and the secret source of that attraction which frequently impels a shaver of the one to be a dealer in the other, are questions for the subtle reasoning of scientific bodies; not the less so, because their investigation would seem calculated to lead to no particular result. It is enough to know that the artist who had the honour of entertaining Mrs. Gamp as his first-floor lodger, united the two pursuits of barbering and bird-fancying; and that it was not an original idea of his, but one in which he had, dispersed about the by-streets and suburbs of the town, a host of rivals.

The name of this householder was Paul Sweedlepipe. But he was commonly called Poll Sweedlepipe; and was not uncommonly believed to have been so christened, among his friends and neighbours.

With the exception of the staircase, and his lodger's private apartment, Poll Sweedlepipe's house was one great bird's nest. Game-cocks resided in the kitchen; pheasants wasted the brightness of their golden plumage on the garret; bantams roosted in the cellar; owls had possession of the bedroom; and specimens of all the smaller fry of birds chirrupped and twittered in the shop. The staircase was sacred to rabbits. There in hutches of all shapes and kinds, made from old packing-cases, boxes, drawers, and tea-chests, they increased in a prodigious degree, and contributed their share towards that complicated whiff which, quite impartially, and without distinction of persons, saluted every nose that was put into Sweedlepipe's easy shaving-shop.

Many noses found their way there, for all that, especially on a Sunday morning, before church-time. Even archbishops shave, or must be shaved, on a Sunday, and beards *will* grow after twelve o'clock on Saturday night, though it be upon the

of base mechanics; who, not being able to engage their by the quarter, hire them by the job, and pay them—e wickedness of copper coin!—in dirty pence. Poll lepipe, the sinner, shaved all comers at a penny each, ut the hair of any customer for twopence; and being a nmarried man, and having some connection in the bird oll got on tolerably well.

was a little elderly man, with a clammy cold right hand, which even rabbits and birds could not remove the smell ing-soap. Poll had something of the bird in his nature, the hawk or eagle, but of the sparrow, that builds in ey-stacks, and inclines to human company. He was not lsome, though, like the sparrow; but peaceful, like the In his walk he strutted; and, in this respect, he bore t resemblance to the pigeon, as well as in a certain prosi- of speech, which might, in its monotony, be likened to the cooing of that bird. He was very inquisitive; and when he stood at his shop-door in the evening-tide, watching the neighbours, with his head on one side, and his eye [illegible] knowingly, there was a dash of the raven in him. [illegible] was no more wickedness in Poll than in a R[illegible] too, when any of his ornithological properties [illegible] verge of going too far, they were quenched, [illegible] down, and neutralised in the barber, just as his [illegible] otherwise, as the head of a shaved magpie—lost itself in a [illegible] of curly black ringlets, parted on one side, and [illegible] to the crown, to indicate immense capacity of [illegible]

Poll had a very small, shrill, treble voice, [illegible] led the wags of Kingsgate Street to insist the [illegible] feminine designation. He had a tender heart, [illegible] he had a good commission to provide three [illegible] rows for a shooting-match, he would observe, [illegible] ate tone, how singular it was that sparrows [illegible] made expressly for such purposes. The question [illegible] were made to shoot them never entered into P[illegible]

Poll were, in his sporting character, a velvetteen [illegible] deal of [illegible] ankle boots, a neckerchief [illegible] colour, and a very tall hat. Pursuing his more [illegible] tion of barber, he generally subsided into an apron [illegible] clean, a flannel jacket, and corduroy knee-shorts. It was this latter costume, but with his apron girded round his waist

as a token of his having shut up shop for the night, that he closed the door one evening, some weeks after the occurrences detailed in the last chapter, and stood upon the steps in Kingsgate Street, listening until the little cracked bell within should leave off ringing. For, until it did — this was Mr. Sweedlepipe's reflection — the place never seemed quiet enough to be left to itself.

"It 's the greediest little bell to ring," said Poll, "that ever was. But it 's quiet at last."

He rolled his apron up a little tighter as he said these words, and hastened down the street. Just as he was turning into Holborn, he ran against a young gentleman in a livery. This youth was bold, though small, and, with several lively expressions of displeasure, turned upon him instantly.

"Now, Stoo-PID!" cried the young gentleman. "Can't you look where you 're a going to — eh? Can't you mind where you 're a coming to — eh? What do you think your eyes was made for — eh? Ah! Yes. Oh! Now then!"

The young gentleman pronounced the two last words in a very loud tone and with frightful emphasis, as though they contained within themselves the essence of the direst aggravation. But he had scarcely done so, when his anger yielded to surprise, and he cried, in a milder tone: —

"What! Polly!"

"Why it ain't you, sure!" cried Poll. "It can't be you!"

"No. It ain't me," returned the youth. "It 's my son: my oldest one. He 's a credit to his father; ain't he, Polly?" With this delicate little piece of banter, he halted on the pavement, and went round and round in circles, for the better exhibition of his figure; rather to the inconvenience of the passengers generally, who were not in an equal state of spirits with himself.

"I would n't have believed it," said Poll. "What! You 've left your old place, then? Have you?"

"Have I!" returned his young friend, who had by this time stuck his hands into the pockets of his white cord breeches, and was swaggering along at the barber's side. "D' ye know a pair of top-boots when you see 'em, Polly? — look here!"

"Beau-ti-ful!" cried Mr. Sweedlepipe.

"D' ye know a slap-up sort of button, when you see it?" said the youth. "Don't look at mine, if you ain't a judge,

[illegible]ese lions' heads was made for men of taste, [illegible]
it.

"Beau-ti-ful!" cried the barber again. "A grass-[illegible] [illegible]t-coat, too, bound with gold! and a cockade in your ha[illegible]

"*I* should hope so," replied the youth. "Blow the [illegible] [illegible]le, though; for, except that it don't turn round, it's like [illegible] ventilator that used to be in the kitchin winder at Todg[illegible] You ain't seen the old lady's name in the Gazette, [illegible] you?"

"No," returned the barber. "Is she a bankrupt?"

"If she ain't, she will be," retorted Bailey. "That bis[illegible] never can be carried on without *me*. Well! How are yo[illegible]

"Oh! I'm pretty well," said Poll. "Are you livin[illegible] this end of the town, or were you coming to see me? [illegible] that the bis'ness that brought you to Holborn?"

"I haven't got no bis'ness in Holborn," returned B[illegible] with some displeasure. "All my bis'ness lays at the [illegible] End. I've got the right sort of governor now. You [illegible] see his face for his whiskers, and can't see his whiskers [illegible] dye upon 'em. That's a gentleman, ain't it? [illegible] like a ride in a cab, would you? Why, it [illegible] to offer it. You'd faint away, only to see [illegible] mild trot round the corner."

To convey a slight idea of the effect of [illegible] Bailey counterfeited in his own person the [illegible] trotting horse, and threw up his head so high, [illegible] against a pump, that he shook his hat off.

"Why, he's own uncle to Capricorn," said [illegible] brother to Cauliflower. He's been through [illegible] two chaney shops since we've had him, and was [illegible] his [illegible]. That's a horse, I hope!"

"Ah! you'll never want to buy any more [illegible] observed Poll, looking on his young friend with [illegible] melancholy. "You'll never want to buy any [illegible] now, to hang up over the sink, will you?"

"*I* should think not," replied Bailey. "Re[illegible] wouldn't have nothin' to say to any bird but [illegible] and *he*'d be walgar. Well, how are you?"

"Oh! I'm pretty well," said Poll. He [illegible] question again because Mr Bailey asked it again. Mr [illegible] asked it again, because — accompanied with a [illegible]

of the white cords, a bend of the knees, and a striking forth of the top-boots — it was an easy, horse-fleshy, turfy sort of thing to do.

"Wot are you up to, old feller?" asked Mr. Bailey, with the same graceful rakishness. He was quite the man-about-town of the conversation, while the easy-shaver was the child.

"Why, I am going to fetch my lodger home," said Paul.

"A woman!" cried Mr. Bailey, "for a twenty-pun' note!"

The little barber hastened to explain that she was neither a young woman, nor a handsome woman, but a nurse, who had been acting as a kind of housekeeper to a gentleman for some weeks past, and left her place that night, in consequence of being superseded by another and a more legitimate housekeeper, to wit, the gentleman's bride.

"He 's newly married, and he brings his young wife home to-night," said the barber. "So I 'm going to fetch my lodger away — Mr. Chuzzlewit's, close behind the Post Office — and carry her box for her."

"Jonas Chuzzlewit's?" said Bailey.

"Ah!" returned Paul; "that 's the name, sure enough. Do you know him?"

"Oh, no!" cried Mr. Bailey; "not at all. And I don't know her? Not neither? Why, they first kept company through me, a'most."

"Ah?" said Paul.

"Ah!" said Mr. Bailey, with a wink; "and she ain't bad-looking, mind you. But her sister was the best. *She* was the merry one. I often used to have a bit of fun with her, in the hold times!"

Mr. Bailey spoke as if he already had a leg and three-quarters in the grave, and this had happened twenty or thirty years ago. Paul Sweedlepipe, the meek, was so perfectly confounded by his precocious self-possession, and his patronising manner, as well as by his boots, cockade, and livery, that a mist swam before his eyes, and he saw — not the Bailey of acknowledged juvenility, from Todgers's Commercial Boarding House, who had made his acquaintance within a twelve-month, by purchasing, at sundry times, small birds at twopence each — but a highly condensed embodiment of all the sporting grooms in London; an abstract of all the stable knowledge of the time; a something at a high pressure that must have had existence

[illegible]y years, and was fraught with terrible experience[illegible] army, though in the cloudy atmosphere of Todgers's Bailey's genius had ever shone out brightly in this part[illegible] respect, it now eclipsed both time and space, cheated [illegible] of their senses, and worked on their belief in defiance [illegible] natural laws. He walked along the tangible and real [illegible] of Holborn Hill, an under-sized boy; and yet he winke[illegible] winks, and thought the thoughts, and did the deeds, an[illegible] the sayings, of an ancient man. There was an old [illegible] within him, and a young surface without. He became [illegible] explicable creature; a breeched and booted Sphinx. [illegible] was no course open to the barber but to go distracted [illegible] self, or to take Bailey for granted; and he wisely chos[illegible] latter.

Mr. Bailey was good enough to continue to bear him [illegible] pany, and to entertain him, as they went, with easy con[illegible] tion on various sporting topics; especially on the compa[illegible] merits, as a general principle, of horses with white stoc[illegible] and horses without. In regard to the style of tail to b[illegible] ferred, Mr. Bailey had opinions of his own, [illegible] plained, but begged they might [illegible] friends, as here he knew he had the most [illegible] some excellent authorities. He treated Mr. S[illegible] dram, compounded agreeably to his own [illegible] informed him had been invented by a member [illegible] Club; and as they were by this time near the [illegible] tion, he observed that, as he had [illegible] the parties, he would, if quite agreeable, be [illegible] Gamp.

P[illegible] knocked at Jonas Chuzzlewit's; and [illegible] opened by that lady, made the two [illegible] known to one another. It was a happy feature [illegible] Mrs. [illegible] twofold profession that it gave her an interest [illegible] that was young as well as in everything that was [illegible] received Mr. Bailey with much kindness.

"It's very good, I'm sure, of you to come," she sa[illegible] landlord, "as well as bring [illegible] a friend. [illegible] that I must trouble you so far as to step in, [illegible] [illegible] has not yet made appearance."

"They're late, ain't they?" inquired her lan[illegible] she had conducted them down stairs into the kitchen

"Well, sir, considerin' the Wings of Love, they are," said Mrs. Gamp.

Mr. Bailey inquired whether the Wings of Love had ever won a plate, or could be backed to do anything remarkable; and being informed that it was not a horse, but merely a poetical or figurative expression, evinced considerable disgust. Mrs. Gamp was so very much astonished by his affable manners and great ease that she was about to propound to her landlord in a whisper the staggering inquiry, whether he was a man or a boy, when Mr. Sweedlepipe, anticipating her design, made a timely diversion.

"He knows Mrs. Chuzzlewit," said Paul aloud.

"There 's nothin' he don't know; that 's my opinion," observed Mrs. Gamp. "All the wickedness of the world is Print to him."

Mr. Bailey received this as a compliment, and said, adjusting his cravat, "reether so."

"As you knows Mrs. Chuzzlewit, you knows, p'raps, what her chris'en name is?" Mrs. Gamp observed.

"Charity," said Bailey.

"That it ain't!" cried Mrs. Gamp.

"Cherry, then," said Bailey. "Cherry 's short for it. It 's all the same."

"It don't begin with a C at all," retorted Mrs. Gamp, shaking her head. "It begins with a M."

"Whew!" cried Mr. Bailey, slapping a little cloud of pipe-clay out of his left leg, "then he 's been and married the merry one!"

As these words were mysterious, Mrs. Gamp called upon him to explain, which Mr. Bailey proceeded to do, that lady listening greedily to everything he said. He was yet in the fulness of his narrative when the sound of wheels, and a double-knock at the street door, announced the arrival of the newly married couple. Begging him to reserve what more he had to say, for her hearing on the way home, Mrs. Gamp took up the candle, and hurried away to receive and welcome the young mistress of the house

"Wishing you appiness and joy with all my art," said Mrs. Gamp, dropping a curtsey as they entered the hall; "and you too, sir. Your lady looks a little tired with the journey, Mr. Chuzzlewit, a pretty dear!"

"[illegible] has bothered enough about it," grumbled Mr. J[illegible] "Now show a light, will you!"

"This way, ma'am, if you please," said Mrs. Gamp, [illegible] up stairs before them. "Things has been made as comfor[illegible] as they could be; but there's many things you'll ha[illegible] alter your own self when you gets time to look about [illegible] Ah! sweet thing! But you don't," added Mrs. Gamp [illegible]nally, "you don't look much like a merry one, I must say[illegible]

It was true; she did not. The death that had gone [illegible] the bridal seemed to have left its shade upon the house. [illegible] air was heavy and oppressive; the rooms were dark; a [illegible] gloom filled up every chink and corner. Upon the h[illegible] stone, like a creature of ill omen, sat the aged clerk, wi[illegible] eyes fixed on some withered branches in the stove. He [illegible] and looked at her.

"So there you are, Mr. Chuff," said Jones carelessly, [illegible] dusted his boots; "still in the land of the living, eh?"

"Still in the land of the living, sir," retorted Mrs. G[illegible] "And Mr. Chuffey may thank you for it, as [illegible] time I've told him."

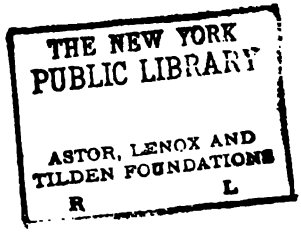
Mr. Jones was not in the best of [illegible] said, as he looked round, "We don't want [illegible] know, Mrs. Gamp."

"I'm a going, immediate, sir," returned [illegible] there's nothink I can do for you, ma'am [illegible] Mrs. Gamp, with a look of great sweetness, [illegible] the [illegible] in her pocket, "ain't there nothink I [illegible] my little [illegible]"

"N[illegible]," said Merry, almost crying. "[illegible] away, [illegible]!"

W[illegible] look of mingled sweetness and [illegible] on the future, [illegible] on the bride, and [illegible] partly spirit[illegible], partly spiritu[illegible], and [illegible] and [illegible] to her art, Mrs. Gamp [illegible] [illegible] printed card, which [illegible] [illegible] sign-board.

"W[illegible] [illegible] my darling [illegible] [illegible] Mrs. Gamp observed, [illegible] [illegible] where [illegible] can keep it [illegible] [illegible] ladies, and it's my [illegible] [illegible] Gamp my [illegible]. Livin' quite handy, [illegible]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old as call in now and then, and make inquiry how your
th and spirits is, my precious chick!"
nd with innumerable leers, winks, coughs, nods, smiles,
curtseys, all leading to the establishment of a mysterious
confidential understanding between herself and the bride,
. Gamp, invoking a blessing upon the house, leered,
ked, coughed, nodded, smiled, and curtseyed herself out of
room.
But I will say, and I would if I was led a Martha to the
es for it," Mrs. Gamp remarked below stairs, in a whisper,
it she don't look much like a merry one at this present
ient of time."
Ah! wait till you hear her laugh!" said Bailey.
Hem!" cried Mrs. Gamp, in a kind of groan. "I will,
l."
hey said no more in the house, for Mrs. Gamp put on her
net, Mr. Sweedlepipe took up her box, and Mr. Bailey
mpanied them towards Kingsgate Street; recounting to Mrs.
ip, as they went along, the origin and progress of his
uaintance with Mrs. Chuzzlewit and her sister. It was a
sant instance of this youth's precocity that he fancied Mrs.
ip had conceived a tenderness for him, and was much
led by her misplaced attachment.
s the door closed heavily behind them, Mrs. Jonas sat
n in a chair, and felt a strange chill creep upon her, whilst
looked about the room. It was pretty much as she had
wn it, but appeared more dreary. She had thought to see
rightened to receive her.
It ain't good enough for you, I suppose?" said Jonas,
ching her looks.
Why, it *is* dull," said Merry, trying to be more herself.
It 'll be duller before you 're done with it," retorted
as, "if you give me any of your airs. You 're a nice arti-
to turn sulky on first coming home! 'Ecod, you used to
e life enough, when you could plague me with it. The
's down stairs. Ring the bell for supper, while I take my
ts off!"
he roused herself from looking after him as he left the room,
lo what he had desired; when the old man Chuffey laid his
d softly on her arm.
"You are not married?" he said eagerly. "Not married?"

"Yes. A month ago. Good Heaven, what is the matter!"

He answered nothing was the matter; and turned from her. But in her fear and wonder, turning also, she saw him rise his trembling hands above his head, and heard him say:—

"Oh! woe, woe, woe, upon this wicked house!"

It was her welcome, — HOME.

## CHAPTER XXVII

SHOWING THAT OLD FRIENDS MAY NOT ONLY APPEAR WITH NEW FACES, BUT IN FALSE COLOURS: THAT PEOPLE ARE PRONE TO BITE: AND THAT BITERS MAY SOMETIMES BE BITTEN.

Mr. Bailey, Junior — for the sporting character, whilom of general utility at Todgers's, had now regularly set up in life under that name, without troubling himself to obtain from the legislature a direct licence in the form of a Private Bill, which of all kinds and classes of bills is without exception the most unreasonable in its charges — Mr. Bailey, Junior, just tall enough to be seen by an inquiring eye, gazing indolently at society from beneath the apron of his master's cab, drove slowly up and down Pall Mall about the hour of noon, in waiting for his "Governor." The horse of distinguished family, who had Capricorn for his nephew, and Cauliflower for his brother, showed himself worthy of his high relations by champing at the bit until his chest was white with foam, and rearing like a horse in heraldry; the plated harness and the patent leather glittered in the sun; pedestrians admired; Mr. Bailey was complacent, but unmoved. He seemed to say, "A barrow, good people, a mere barrow; nothing to what we could do, if we chose!" and on he went, squaring his short green arms outside the apron, as if he were hooked on to it by his armpits.

Mr. Bailey had a great opinion of Brother to Cauliflower, and estimated his powers highly. But he never told him so. On the contrary, it was his practice, in driving that animal, to assail him with disrespectful, if not injurious, expressions, as, "Ah! would you!" "Did you think it then?" "Where are you going to now?" "No you won't, my lad!" and similar fragmentary remarks. These being usually accompanied by a jerk of the rein, or a crack of the whip, led to many trials of strength between them, and to many contentions for the upper hand, terminating, now and then, in china-shops, and other unusual goals, as Mr. Bailey had already hinted to his friend Poll Sweedlepipe.

On the present occasion Mr. Bailey, being in spirits, was
man commonly hard upon his charge; in consequence of w
that fiery animal confined himself almost entirely to his
legs in displaying his paces, and constantly got himself
positions with reference to the cabriolet that very much
the passengers in the street. But Mr. Bailey, not at all
turbed, had still a shower of pleasantries to bestow on any
who crossed his path; as calling to a full-grown coal-heav
a wagon, who for a moment blocked the way, "Now, y
'un, who trusted you with a cart?" inquiring of elderly l
who wanted to cross, and ran back again, "Why they did n
to the workhouse and get an order to be buried;" temp
boys, with friendly words, to get up behind, and immedia
afterwards cutting them down; and the like flashes of a c
ful humour, which he would occasionally relieve by going
St. James's Square at a hand gallop, and coming slowly
Pall Mall by another entry, as if, in the interval, his pa
been a perfect crawl.

It was not until these amusements had been very fre
peated, and the apple-stall at the corner had
miraculous escapes as to appear impregnable, that M
was summoned to the door of a certain house, in Pall Mall
turning short, obeyed the call and jumped
until he had held the bridle for some minutes
jerk of Cauliflower's brother's head, and
flower's brother's nostril, taking him off his
while, that two persons entered the vehicle,
the reins and drove rapidly off. Nor was it
had run after it some hundreds of yards in vain
aged to lift his short leg into the iron step, and
his heels upon the little footboard behind.
became a sight to see, and
upon the other, now trying to look round the
now on that, and now endeavouring to peep over
as it went dashing in among the carts and
head to heel Newmarket.

The appearance of Mr Bailey's governor as he
fully justified that enthusiastic youth's
the wondering Paul. He had a world of jet
upon his head, upon his cheeks, upon his chin, upon
lip. His clothes, symmetrically made, were of the newest

ion and the costliest kind. Flowers of gold and blue, and green and blushing red, were on his waistcoat; precious chains and jewels sparkled on his breast; his fingers, clogged with brilliant rings, were as unwieldy as summer flies but newly rescued from a honey-pot. The daylight mantled in his gleaming hat and boots as in a polished glass. And yet, though changed his name, and changed his outward surface, it was Tigg. Though turned and twisted upside down and inside out, as great men have been sometimes known to be; though no longer Montague Tigg, but Tigg Montague; still it was Tigg; the same Satanic, gallant, military Tigg. The brass was burnished, lacquered, newly stamped, yet it was the true Tigg metal notwithstanding.

Beside him sat a smiling gentleman, of less pretensions and of business looks, whom he addressed as David. Surely not the David of the — how shall it be phrased? — the triumvirate of golden balls? Not David, tapster at the Lombards' Arms? Yes. The very man.

"The secretary's salary, David," said Mr. Montague, "the office being now established, is eight hundred pounds per annum, with his house-rent, coals, and candles free. His five-and-twenty shares he holds, of course. Is that enough?"

David smiled and nodded, and coughed behind a little locked portfolio which he carried; with an air that proclaimed him to be the secretary in question.

"If that's enough," said Montague, "I will propose it at the Board to-day, in my capacity as chairman."

The secretary smiled again; laughed, indeed, this time; and said, rubbing his nose slily with one end of the portfolio: —

"It was a capital thought, was n't it?"

"What was a capital thought, David?" Mr. Montague inquired.

"The Anglo-Bengalee," tittered the secretary.

"The Anglo-Bengalee Disinterested Loan and Life Insurance Company is rather a capital concern, I hope, David," said Montague.

"Capital, indeed!" cried the secretary, with another laugh — "in one sense."

"In the only important one," observed the chairman; "which is number one, David."

"What," asked the secretary, bursting into another laugh,

"what will be the paid-up capital according to the next prospectus?"

"A figure of two, and as many oughts after it as the printer can get into the same line," replied his friend. "Ha, ha!"

At this they both laughed; the secretary so vehemently that, in kicking up his feet, he kicked the apron open, and nearly started Cauliflower's brother into an oyster shop; not to mention Mr. Bailey's receiving such a sudden swing that he held on for the moment, quite a young Fame, by one strap and no legs.

"What a chap you are!" exclaimed David admiringly, when this little alarm had subsided.

"Say genius, David, genius."

"Well, upon my soul, you *are* a genius then," said David. "I always knew you had the gift of the gab, of course; but I never believed you were half the man you are. How could I!"

"I rise with circumstances, David. That 's a point of genius in itself," said Tigg. "If you were to lose a hundred pound wager to me at this minute, David, and were to pay it (which is most confoundedly improbable), I should rise, in a mental point of view, directly."

It is due to Mr. Tigg to say that he had really risen with his opportunities; and peculating on a grander scale, had become a grander man, altogether.

"Ha, ha," cried the secretary, laying his hand, with growing familiarity, upon the chairman's arm. "When I look at you, and think of your property in Bengal being — ha, ha, ha! —"

The half-expressed idea seemed no less ludicrous to Mr. Tigg than to his friend, for he laughed too, heartily.

"— being," resumed David, "being amenable — your property in Bengal being amenable — to all claims upon the company; when I look at you and think of that, you might tickle me into fits by waving the feather of a pen at me. Upon my soul, you might!"

"It 's a devilish fine property," said Tigg Montague, "to be amenable to any claims. The preserve of tigers alone is worth a mint of money, David."

David could only reply in the intervals of his laughter, "Oh, what a chap you are!" and so continued to laugh, and hold his sides, and wipe his eyes, for some time, without offering any other observation.

"A capital idea!" said Tigg, returning after a time to his

companion's first remark; "no doubt it was a capital idea. It was my idea."

"No, no. It was my idea," said David. "Hang it, let a man have some credit. Didn't I say to you that I 'd saved a few pounds — "

"You said! Didn't I say to you," interposed Tigg, "that *I* had come into a few pounds?"

"Certainly you did," returned David warmly, "but that 's not the idea. Who said that if we put the money together we could furnish an office, and make a show?"

"And who said," retorted Mr. Tigg, "that, providing we did it on a sufficiently large scale, we could furnish an office and make a show, without any money at all? Be rational, and just, and calm, and tell me whose idea was that?"

"Why, there," David was obliged to confess, "you had the advantage of me, I admit. But I don't put myself on a level with you. I only want a little credit in the business."

"All the credit you deserve, you have," said Tigg. "The plain work of the company, David — figures, books, circulars, advertisements, pen, ink and paper, sealing-wax and wafers — is admirably done by you. You are a first-rate groveller. I don't dispute it. But the ornamental department, David; the inventive and poetical department — "

"Is entirely yours," said his friend. "No question of it. But with such a swell turn-out as this, and all the handsome things you 've got about you, and the life you lead, I mean to say it 's a precious comfortable department, too."

"Does it gain the purpose? Is it Anglo-Bengalee?" asked Tigg.

"Yes," said David.

"Could you undertake it yourself?" demanded Tigg.

"No," said David.

"Ha, ha!" laughed Tigg. "Then be contented with your station and your profits, David, my fine fellow, and bless the day that made us acquainted across the counter of our common uncle, for it was a golden day to you."

It will have been already gathered from the conversation of these worthies that they were embarked in an enterprise of some magnitude, in which they addressed the public in general from the strong position of having everything to gain, and nothing at all to lose; and which, based upon this great principle, was thriving pretty comfortably.

...glo-Bengalee Disinterested Loan and Life Insu... Company started into existence one morning, not an i... institution, but a grown-up company running alone at a ... pace, and doing business right and left; with a "branch" ... first floor over a tailor's at the west end of the town, and ... offices in a new street in the city, comprising the upper pa... a spacious house, resplendent in stucco and plate-glass, ... wire-blinds in all the windows, and "Anglo-Bengalee" w... into the pattern of every one of them. On the door-pos... painted again, in large letters, "Offices of the Anglo-Ben... Disinterested Loan and Life Insurance Company," and o... door was a large brass plate with the same inscription; a... kept very bright, as courting inquiry; staring the city ... countenance after office hours on working days, and al... long on Sundays; and looking bolder than the Bank. W... the offices were newly plastered, newly painted, newly pap... newly countered, newly floor-clothed, newly tabled, ... chaired, newly fitted up in every way, with goods that ... substantial and expensive, and designed (like the compa... last. Business! Look at the green ledgers with ... like strong cricket-balls beaten flat; the court-g... ries, day-books, almanacs, letter-boxes, weighing-ma... letters, rows of fire-buckets for dashing out a ... its first spark, and saving the immense wealth ... bonds belonging to the company; look at the ... clock, the office seal — in its capacious self ... thing. Solidity! Look at the massive blocks ... the chimney-pieces, and the gorgeous parapet ... house! Publicity! Why, Anglo-Bengalee Disinterested ... and Life Insurance Company is painted on the ... tles. It is repeated at every turn until the ... with it, and the head is giddy. It is engraved ... of all the letter-paper, and it makes a ... seal, and it shines out of the porter's buttons, ... twenty times in every circular and public ... David Crimple, Esquire, Secretary and resident Director ... the liberty of inviting your attention to the ... ment of the advantages offered by the Anglo-Bengalee Dis... ested Loan and Life Insurance Company, and ... you that any connection on your part with that ... must result in a perpetual Christmas Box and constant

creasing Bonus to yourself, and that nobody can run any risk by the transaction except the office, which, in its great liberality, is pretty sure to lose. And this, David Crimple, Esquire, submits to you (and the odds are heavy you believe him), is the best guarantee that can reasonably be suggested by the Board of Management for its permanence and stability.

This gentleman's name, by the way, had been originally Crimp; but as the word was susceptible of an awkward construction and might be misrepresented, he had altered it to Crimple.

Lest with all these proofs and confirmations, any man should be suspicious of the Anglo-Bengalee Disinterested Loan and Life Insurance Company; should doubt in tiger, cab, or person, Tigg Montague, Esquire (of Pall Mall and Bengal), or any other name in the imaginative list of Directors; there was a porter on the premises — a wonderful creature, in a vast red waistcoat and a short-tailed pepper-and-salt coat — who carried more conviction to the minds of sceptics than the whole establishment without him. No confidences existed between him and the Directorship; nobody knew where he had served last; no character or explanation had been given or required. No questions had been asked on either side. This mysterious being, relying solely on his figure, had applied for the situation, and had been instantly engaged on his own terms. They were high; but he knew, doubtless, that no man could carry such an extent of waistcoat as himself, and felt the full value of his capacity to such an institution. When he sat upon a seat erected for him in a corner of the office, with his glazed hat hanging on a peg over his head, it was impossible to doubt the respectability of the concern. It went on doubling itself with every square inch of his red waistcoat until, like the problem of the nails in the horse's shoes, the total became enormous. People had been known to apply to effect an insurance on their lives for a thousand pounds, and, looking at him, to beg, before the form of proposal was filled up, that it might be made two. And yet he was not a giant. His coat was rather small than otherwise. The whole charm was in his waistcoat. Respectability, competence, property in Bengal or anywhere else, responsibility to any amount on the part of the company that employed him, were all expressed in that one garment.

Rival offices had endeavoured to lure him away; Lombard

elf had beckoned to him; rich companies had w
be a Beadle!" but he still continued faithful to
-Bengalee. Whether he was a deep rogue, or a sta
ton, it was impossible to make out, but he appeare
ve in the Anglo-Bengalee. He was grave with imag
ures of office; and having nothing whatever to do, and s
hing less to take care of, would look as if the pressure o
numerous duties, and a sense of the treasure in the compa
strong-room, made him a solemn and a thoughtful man.

As the cabriolet drove up to the door, this officer appe
bare-headed on the pavement, crying aloud, "Room for
chairman, room for the chairman, if you please!" much to
admiration of the bystanders, who, it is needless to say,
their attention directed to the Anglo-Bengalee Company th
forth, by that means. Mr. Tigg leaped gracefully out,
lowed by the Managing Director (who was by this time
distant and respectful), and ascended the stairs, still pre
by the porter, who cried as he went, "By your leave t
by your leave! The Chairman of the Board, Gentle — wi
In like manner, but in a still more stentorian voice, he
the chairman through the public office, where some
clients were transacting business, into an awful
belled Board Room, the door of which sanctuary
closed, and screened the great capitalist from vulgar eyes.

The board room had a Turkey carpet in it, a
portrait of Tigg Montague, Esquire, as chairman, a
posing chair of office, garnished with an ivory
little hand-bell, and a long table, set out at
sheets of blotting-paper, foolscap, clean pens, and
The chairman having taken his seat with great
secretary supported him on his right hand, and the
bolt upright behind them, forming a warm background
coat. This was the Board, everything else being a
hearted little fiction.

"Bullamy!" said Mr. Tigg.

"Sir!" replied the Porter.

"Let the Medical Officer know, with my compliments,
I wish to see him."

Bullamy cleared his throat, and bustled out into the
crying, "The Chairman of the Board wishes to see the M
Officer. By your leave there! by your leave!" He

turned with the gentleman in question; and at both openings of the board-room door — at his coming in and at his going out — simple clients were seen to stretch their necks and stand upon their toes, thirsting to catch the slightest glimpse of that mysterious chamber.

"Jobling, my dear friend!" said Mr. Tigg, "how are you? Bullamy, wait outside. Crimple, don't leave us. Jobling, my good fellow, I am glad to see you."

"And how are *you*, Mr. Montague, eh?" said the Medical Officer, throwing himself luxuriously into an easy-chair (they were all easy-chairs in the board room), and taking a handsome gold snuff-box from the pocket of his black satin waistcoat. "How are you? A little worn with business, eh? If so, rest. A little feverish from wine, humph? If so, water. Nothing at all the matter, and quite comfortable? Then take some lunch. A very wholesome thing at this time of day to strengthen the gastric juices with lunch, Mr. Montague."

The Medical Officer (he was the same medical officer who had followed poor old Anthony Chuzzlewit to the grave, and who had attended Mrs. Gamp's patient at the Bull) smiled in saying these words; and casually added, as he brushed some grains of snuff from his shirt-frill, "I always take it myself about this time of day, do you know?"

"Bullamy!" said the Chairman, ringing the little bell.

"Sir!"

"Lunch."

"Not on my account, I hope?" said the doctor. "You are very good. Thank you. I 'm quite ashamed. Ha, ha! if I had been a sharp practitioner, Mr. Montague, I should n't have mentioned it without a fee; for you may depend upon it, my dear sir, that, if you don't make a point of taking lunch, you 'll very soon come under my hands. Allow me to illustrate this. In Mr. Crimple's leg — "

The resident director gave an involuntary start, for the doctor, in the heat of his demonstration, caught it up and laid it across his own, as if he were going to take it off, then and there.

"In Mr. Crimple's leg, you 'll observe," pursued the doctor, turning back his cuffs and spanning the limb with both hands, "where Mr. Crimple's knee fits into the socket, here, there is — that is to say, between the bone and the socket — a certain quantity of animal oil."

[illegible] do you pick *my* leg out for?" said Mr. Cri[illegible] looking with something of an anxious expression at his [illegible] 's the same with other legs, ain't it?"

Never you mind, my good sir," returned the doctor, [illegible]ing his head, "whether it is the same with other legs, o[illegible] the same."

"But I do mind," said David.

"I take a particular case, Mr. Montague," returned the [illegible]tor, "as illustrating my remark, you observe. In this p[illegible] of Mr. Crimple's leg, sir, there is a certain amount of [illegible] oil. In every one of Mr. Crimple's joints, sir, there is [illegible] or less of the same deposit. Very good. If Mr. Crimpl[illegible]lects his meals, or fails to take his proper quantity of [illegible] that oil wanes, and becomes exhausted. What is the [illegible]quence? Mr. Crimple's bones sink down into their socket[illegible] and Mr. Crimple becomes a weazen, puny, stunted, mi[illegible] man!"

The doctor let Mr. Crimple's leg fall suddenly, as if h[illegible] already in that agreeable condition; turned down his wris[illegible] again, and looked triumphantly at the chairman.

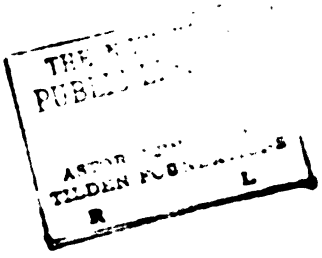
"We know a few secrets of nature in [illegible]" said the doctor. "Of course we do. We [illegible] pass the Hall and the College for that [illegible] in society *by* that. It's extraordinary how [illegible] these subjects generally. Where do you suppose [illegible] doctor closed one eye, as he leaned back [illegible] and formed a triangle with his hands, of which [illegible] composed the base — "where do you suppose Mr. [illegible] stomach is?"

Mr. Crimple, more agitated than before, clapped [illegible] immediately below his waistcoat.

"Not at all," cried the doctor, "not at all. [illegible] mistake! My good sir, you're altogether deceived."

"I feel it there, when it's out of order, that [illegible]" said Crimple.

"You think you do," replied the doctor. "[illegible] better. There was a patient of mine once, [illegible] mourning rings upon his fingers, and [illegible] head, "a gentleman who did me the honour [illegible] mention of me in his will — 'in testimony [illegible] to say, 'of the unremitting zeal, talent, and att[illegible]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my friend and medical attendant, John Jobling, Esquire, R. C. S.,' — who was so overcome by the idea of having all life laboured under an erroneous view of the locality of this ɔortant organ, that when I assured him, on my professional utation, he was mistaken, he burst into tears, put out his ıd, and said, 'Jobling, God bless you!' Immediately after-ʻds he became speechless, and was ultimately buried at Brix-."

'By your leave there!" cried Bullamy, without. "By your ɾe! refreshment for the board room!"

'Ha!" said the doctor jocularly, as he rubbed his hands, drew his chair nearer to the table. "The true Life Insur-e, Mr. Montague. The best Policy in the world, my dear We should be provident, and eat and drink whenever we Eh, Mr. Crimple?"

The resident Director acquiesced rather sulkily, as if the grati-tion of replenishing his stomach had been impaired by the un-lement of his preconceived opinions in reference to its situa-ı. But the appearance of the porter and under-porter with ʻay covered with a snow-white cloth, which, being thrown k, displayed a pair of cold roast fowls, flanked by some ted meats and a cool salad, quickly restored his good hu-ır. It was enhanced still further by the arrival of a bottle excellent madeira, and another of champagne; and he soon ıcked the repast with an appetite scarcely inferior to that of medical officer.

The lunch was handsomely served, with a profusion of rich ss, plate, and china; which seemed to denote that eating and ıking on a showy scale formed no unimportant item in the iness of the Anglo-Bengalee Directorship. As it proceeded, medical officer grew more and more joyous and red-faced, ɔmuch that every mouthful he ate, and every drop of wine swallowed, seemed to impart new lustre to his eyes, and to ıt up new sparks in his nose and forehead.

n certain quarters of the city and its neighbourhood, Mr. ling was, as we have already seen in some measure, a very ular character. He had a portentously sagacious chin, and ompous voice, with a rich huskiness in some of its tones t went directly to the heart, like a ray of light shining ɔugh the ruddy medium of choice old burgundy. His neck-chief and shirt-frill were ever of the whitest, his clothes of

st and sleekest, his gold watch-chain of the he
eals of the largest. His boots, which were alw
ightest, creaked as he walked. Perhaps he could
head, rub his hands, or warm himself before a fire,
any man alive; and he had a peculiar way of sm
ps and saying, "Ah!" at intervals while patients d
their symptoms, which inspired great confidence. It
to express, "I know what you're going to say better th
do; but go on, go on." As he talked on all occasions w
he had anything to say or not, it was unanimously obser
him that he was "full of anecdote;" and his experien
profit from it were considered, for the same reason,
something much too extensive for description. His
patients could never praise him too highly; and the co
his male admirers would always say this for him t
friends, "that whatever Jobling's professional skill m
(and it could not be denied that he had a very high
tion), he was one of the most comfortable fellows you e
in your life!"

Jobling was for many reasons, and not last in the
cause his connection lay principally among tradesmen a
families, exactly the sort of person whom the Anglo-
Company wanted for a medical officer. But J
too knowing to connect himself with the company in a
ties than as a paid (and well-paid) functionary, or to a
connection to be misunderstood abroad, if he
Hence he always stated the case to an inquiring patie
this manner:—

"Why, my dear sir, with regard to the Anglo-Bengal
information, you see, is limited, very limited. I
medical officer, in consideration of a certain m
The labourer is worthy of his hire. *Bis dat qui*
("classical scholar, Jobling!" thinks the patient. "W
man!") "and I receive it regularly. Therefore I am
so far as my own knowledge goes, to speak well of the
lishment." ("Nothing can be fairer than Jobling's
thinks the patient, who has just paid Jobling's bill
"If you put any question to me, my dear friend,
doctor, "touching the responsibility or capital of the
there I am at fault; for I have no head for figures, a
being a shareholder, am delicate of showing any

whatever on the subject. Delicacy — your amiable lady will agree with me I am sure — should be one of the first characteristics of a medical man." ("Nothing can be finer or more gentlemanly than Jobling's feeling," thinks the patient.) "Very good, my dear sir, so the matter stands. You don't know Mr. Montague? I 'm sorry for it. A remarkably handsome man, and quite the gentleman in every respect. Property, I am told, in India. House and everything belonging to him beautiful. Costly furniture on the most elegant and lavish scale. And pictures, which even in an anatomical point of view are per—fection. In case you should ever think of doing anything with the company I 'll pass you, you may depend upon it. I can conscientiously report you a healthy subject. If I understand any man's constitution, it is yours; and this little indisposition has done him more good, ma'am," says the doctor, turning to the patient's wife, "than if he had swallowed the contents of half the nonsensical bottles in my surgery. For they *are* nonsense — to tell the honest truth, one half of them *are* nonsense — compared with such a constitution as his!" — ("Jobling is the most friendly creature I ever met with in my life," thinks the patient; "and upon my word and honour I 'll consider of it!")

"Commission to you, doctor, on four new policies, and a loan this morning, eh?" said Crimple, looking, when they had finished lunch, over some papers brought in by the porter. "Well done!"

"Jobling, my dear friend," said Tigg, "long life to you."

"No, no — nonsense. Upon my word I 've no right to draw the commission," said the doctor; "I have n't really. It 's picking your pocket. I don't recommend anybody here. I only say what I know. My patients ask me what I know, and I tell 'em what I know. Nothing else. Caution is my weak side, that 's the truth; and always was from a boy. That is," said the doctor, filling his glass, "caution in behalf of other people. Whether I would repose confidence in this company myself, if I had not been paying money elsewhere for many years — that 's quite another question."

He tried to look as if there were no doubt about it; but feeling that he did it but indifferently, changed the theme, and praised the wine.

"Talking of wine," said the doctor, "reminds me of one of

lasses of light old port I ever drank in my life;
—a funeral. You have not seen anything of—of
Montague, have you?" handing him a card.
is not buried, I hope?" said Tigg, as he took
honour of his company is not requested if he is."
Ha, ha!" laughed the doctor. "No; not quite. He
honourably connected with that very occasion though."
"Oh!" said Tigg, smoothing his moustache, as he cast
eyes upon the name. "I recollect. No. He has not
here."
The words were on his lips, when Bullamy entered,
presented a card to the medical officer.
"Talk of the what's his name—" observed the doctor
ing.
"And he's sure to appear, eh?" said Tigg.
"Why, no, Mr. Montague, no," returned the doctor.
will not say that in the present case, for this gentleman is
far from it."
"So much the better," retorted Tigg. "So much the
adaptable to the Anglo-Bengalee. Bullamy, [illegible]
take the things out by the other door. Mr. [illegible]
"Shall I introduce him?" asked Jobling.
"I shall be eternally delighted," answered Tigg, [illegible]
hand and smiling sweetly.
The doctor disappeared into the outer office, and [illegible]
returned with Jonas Chuzzlewit.
"Mr. Montague," said Jobling. "All [illegible] Mr.
Mr. Chuzzlewit. My dear friend—our chairman. [illegible]
you know," he added, checking himself with [illegible]
and looking round with a smile, "that's a very [illegible]
instance of the force of example. It really is a very [illegible]
able instance of the force of example. I say [illegible]
Why do I say our chairman? Because he is not [illegible]
you know. I have no connection with the company [illegible]
than giving them, for a certain fee and reward, [illegible]
ion as a medical man, precisely as I may give it [illegible]
Jack Noakes or Tom Styles. Then why do I say [illegible]
man? Simply because I hear the phrase constantly [illegible]
about me. Such is the involuntary operation of the [illegible]
faculty in the imitative biped, man. Mr. [illegible] I [illegible]
you never take snuff? Injudicious. You should [illegible]

Pending these remarks on the part of the doctor, and the lengthened and sonorous pinch with which he followed them up, Jonas took a seat at the board, as ungainly a man as ever he has been within the reader's knowledge. It is too common with all of us, but it is especially in the nature of a mean mind, to be overawed by fine clothes and fine furniture. They had a very decided influence on Jonas.

"Now you two gentlemen have business to discuss, I know," said the doctor, "and your time is precious. So is mine; for several lives are waiting for me in the next room, and I have a round of visits to make after — after I have taken 'em. Having had the happiness to introduce you to each other, I may go about my business. Good-by. But allow me, Mr. Montague, before I go, to say this of my friend who sits beside you, — that gentleman has done more, sir," rapping his snuff-box solemnly, "to reconcile me to human nature, than any man alive or dead. Good-by!"

With these words Jobling bolted abruptly out of the room, and proceeded in his own official department, to impress the lives in waiting with a sense of his keen conscientiousness in the discharge of his duty, and the great difficulty of getting into the Anglo-Bengalee; by feeling their pulses, looking at their tongues, listening at their ribs, poking them in the chest, and so forth; though, if he did n't well know beforehand that whatever kind of lives they were, the Anglo-Bengalee would accept them readily, he was far from being the Jobling that his friends considered him; and was not the original Jobling, but a spurious imitation.

Mr. Crimple also departed on the business of the morning; and Jonas Chuzzlewit and Tigg were left alone.

"I learn from our friend," said Tigg, drawing his chair towards Jonas with a winning ease of manner, "that you have been thinking — "

"Oh! Ecod then, he 'd no right to say so," cried Jonas interrupting. "I did n't tell *him* my thoughts. If he took it into his head that I was coming here for such or such a purpose, why, that 's his look-out. I don't stand committed by that."

Jonas said this offensively enough; for over and above the habitual distrust of his character, it was in his nature to seek to revenge himself on the fine clothes and the fine furniture, in

rtion as he had been unable to withstand the

come here to ask a question or two, and get a
or two to consider of, I don't bind myself to anyth
understand that, you know," said Jonas.

y dear fellow!" cried Tigg, clapping him on the sh
I applaud your frankness. If men like you and I
enly at first, all possible misunderstanding is avoided.
ould I disguise what you know so well, but what the
er dream of? We companies are all birds of prey,
ds of prey. The only question is, whether, in servin
wn turn, we can serve yours too; whether in double-l
ur own nest, we can put a single lining into yours.
you're in our secret. You're behind the scenes.
make a merit of dealing plainly with you, when we kno
can't help it."

It was remarked, on the first introduction of Mr. Jonas
**these pages, that there is a simplicity of cunning, no less**
**a simplicity of innocence, and that in all matters involv**
faith in knavery he was the most credulous of men.
Tigg had preferred any claim to high and honourable
Jonas would have suspected him though he had been a
model of probity: but when he gave utterance to
thoughts of everything and everybody, Jonas began to think,
he was a pleasant fellow, and one to be talked to freely.

He changed his position in his chair, not for a more
ward, but for a more boastful attitude, and smiled
miserable conceit, rejoined: —

"You are a bad man of business, Mr. M
know how to set about it, I *will* say."

"Tut, tut," said Tigg, nodding confidentially, and
his white teeth. "we are not children, Mr
are grown men, I hope."

Jonas assented, and said after a short silence, first
out his legs and sticking one arm akimbo to
festive at home he was: —

"The truth is — "

"Don't say the truth," interposed Tigg, with an
"It's so like humbug."

Greatly charmed by this, Jonas began again.

"The long and the short of it is — "

"Better," muttered Tigg. "Much better!"

"— That I did n't consider myself very well used by one or two of the old companies in some negotiations I have had with 'em — once had, I mean. They started objections they had no right to start, and put questions they had no right to put, and carried things much too high for my taste."

As he made these observations he cast down his eyes, and looked curiously at the carpet. Mr. Tigg looked curiously at him.

He made so long a pause, that Tigg came to the rescue, and said, in his pleasantest manner: —

"Take a glass of wine?"

"No, no," returned Jonas, with a cunning shake of the head; "none of that, thankee. No wine over business. All very well for you, but it would n't do for me."

"What an old hand you are, Mr. Chuzzlewit!" said Tigg, leaning back in his chair, and leering at him through his half-shut eyes.

Jonas shook his head again, as much as to say, "You 're right there;" and then resumed jocosely: —

"Not such an old hand, either, but that I 've been and got married. That 's rather green, you 'll say. Perhaps it is, especially as she 's young. But one never knows what may happen to these women, so I 'm thinking of insuring her life. It is but fair, you know, that a man should secure some consolation in case of meeting with such a loss."

"If anything *can* console him under such heart-breaking circumstances," murmured Tigg, with his eyes shut up as before.

"Exactly," returned Jonas; "if anything can. Now, supposing I did it here, I should do it cheap, I know, and easy, without bothering her about it; which I 'd much rather not do, for it 's just in a woman's way to take it into her head, if you talk to her about such things, that she 's going to die directly."

"So it is," cried Tigg, kissing his hand in honour of the sex. "You 're quite right. Sweet, silly, fluttering little simpletons!"

"Well," said Jonas, "on that account, you know, and because offence has been given me in other quarters, I would n't mind patronising this Company. But I want to know what

sort of security there is for the Company's going on. That's the —"

"Not the smallest!" cried Tigg, holding up his jewelled hand. "Don't use that Sunday School expression, please!"

"The long and the short of it," said Jonas. "The long and the short of it is, what's the security?"

"The paid-up capital, my dear sir," said Tigg, referring to some papers on the table, "is, at this present moment —"

"Oh! I understand all about paid-up capitals, you know," said Jonas.

"You do!" cried Tigg, stopping short.

"I should hope so."

He turned the papers down again, and moving nearer to him, said in his ear: —

"I know you do. I know you do. Look at me!"

It was not much in Jonas's way to look straight at anybody; but thus requested, he made shift to take a tolerable survey of the chairman's features. The chairman fell back a little to give him the better opportunity.

"You know me!" he inquired, elevating his eyebrows. "You recollect! You've seen me before!"

"Why, I thought I remembered your face when I first came in," said Jonas, gazing at it; "but I couldn't call to mind where I had seen it. No, I don't remember, even now. Was it in the street!"

"Was it in Pecksniff's parlour!" said Tigg.

"In Pecksniff's parlour!" echoed Jonas, fetching a long breath. "You don't mean when —"

"Yes," cried Tigg, "when there was a very charming and delightful little family party, at which yourself and your respected father assisted."

"Well, never mind *him*," said Jonas. "He's dead and there's no help for it."

"Dead, is he!" cried Tigg. "Venerable old gentleman, is he dead! You're very like him."

Jonas received this compliment with anything but a good grace, — perhaps because of his own private sentiments in reference to the personal appearance of his deceased parent; perhaps because he was not best pleased to find that Montague and Tigg were one. That gentleman perceived it, and tapping him familiarly on the sleeve, beckoned him to the window. From

this moment Mr. Montague's jocularity and flow of spirits were remarkable.

"Do you find me at all changed since that time?" he asked. "Speak plainly."

Jonas looked hard at his waistcoat and jewels; and said, "Rather, ecod!"

"Was I at all seedy in those days?" asked Montague.

"Precious seedy," said Jonas.

Mr. Montague pointed down into the street, where Bailey and the cab were in attendance.

"Neat — perhaps dashing. Do you know whose it is?"

"No."

"Mine. Do you like this room?"

"It must have cost a lot of money," said Jonas.

"You 're right. Mine too. Why don't you" — he whispered this, and nudged him in the side with his elbow — "why don't you take premiums, instead of paying 'em? That 's what a man like you should do. Join us!"

Jonas stared at him in amazement.

"Is that a crowded street?" asked Montague, calling his attention to the multitude without.

"Very," said Jonas, only glancing at it, and immediately afterwards looking at him again.

"There are printed calculations," said his companion, "which will tell you pretty nearly how many people will pass up and down that thoroughfare in the course of a day. *I* can tell you how many of 'em will come in here, merely because they find this office here; knowing no more about it than they do of the Pyramids. Ha, ha! Join us. You shall come in cheap."

Jonas looked at him harder and harder.

"I can tell you," said Tigg in his ear, "how many of 'em will buy annuities, effect insurances, bring us their money in a hundred shapes and ways, force it upon us, trust us as if we were the mint; yet know no more about us than you do of that crossing-sweeper at the corner. Not so much. Ha, ha!"

Jonas gradually broke into a smile.

"Yah!" said Montague, giving him a pleasant thrust in the breast; "you 're too deep for us, you dog, or I would n't have told you. Dine with me to-morrow, in Pall Mall!"

"I will," said Jonas.

[illegible] !" cried Montague. "Wait a bit. Take these [illegible] you, and look 'em over. See," he said, [illegible] [illegible]ted forms from the table. "B is a little trades[illegible] [illegible]rson, artist, author, any common thing you like."

[illegible]" said Jonas, looking greedily over his [illegible] Well!"

"B wants a loan. Say fifty or a hundred pound, [illegible] [illegible] no matter. B pr[illegible] self and two securities. [illegible]d. Two securities [illegible] a bond. B insures his own [illegible] double the amount, [illegible] [illegible]rings two friends' lives [illegible] just to patronise the [illegible] Ha, ha, ha! Is that a [illegible] notion!"

"Ecod, that's a capital notion!" cried Jonas. "But [illegible] he really do it?"

"Do it!" repeated the chairman. "B's hard-up, my [illegible] fellow, and will do anything. Don't you see? It's [illegible] idea."

"It does you honour: I'm blest if it don't," [illegible] J[illegible]

"I think it does," replied the chairman, [illegible] to hear you say so. B pays the highest lawful [illegible]

"That ain't much," interrupted Jonas.

"Right! quite right!" retorted T[illegible] upon the part of the law that it [illegible] down upon unfortunate victims, when it takes [illegible] good interest for itself from all its clients. [illegible] at home, and justice begins next door. Well! [illegible] hard upon us, we're not exactly soft upon B [illegible] charging B the regular interest, we get B's [illegible] friends' premiums, and we charge B for [illegible] we accept him [illegible] we charge B for [illegible] man at a pound a week to make [illegible] for [illegible] and, in short, my good fellow, we [illegible] [illegible] B [illegible] and down dale, and make a [illegible] little property out of him. Ha, ha, ha! [illegible] of [illegible]" said Tigg, pointing to the [illegible] [illegible] Ha, ha, ha!"

J[illegible] very much indeed. It was [illegible]

[illegible]" said Tigg Montague, "we grant [illegible] [illegible] advantages [illegible] [illegible] the old ladies and gentlemen [illegible]

buy 'em. Ha, ha, ha! And we pay 'em too — perhaps. Ha, ha, ha!"

"But there 's responsibility in that," said Jonas, looking doubtful.

"I take it all myself," said Tigg Montague. "Here I am, responsible for everything. The only responsible person in the establishment! Ha, ha, ha! Then there are the Life Insurances without loans — the common policies. Very profitable, very comfortable. Money down, you know; repeated every year; capital fun!"

"But when they begin to fall in," observed Jonas. "It 's all very well, while the office is young, but when the policies begin to die — that 's what I am thinking of."

"At the first start, my dear fellow," said Montague, "to show you how correct your judgment is, we had a couple of unlucky deaths that brought us down to a grand piano."

"Brought you down where?" cried Jonas.

"I give you my sacred word of honour," said Tigg Montague, "that I raised money on every other individual piece of property, and was left alone in the world with a grand piano. And it was an upright-grand too, so that I could n't even sit upon it. But, my dear fellow, we got over it. We granted a great many new policies that week (liberal allowance to solicitors, by the bye), and got over it in no time. Whenever they should chance to fall in heavily, as you very justly observe they may, one of these days; then —" he finished the sentence in so low a whisper, that only one disconnected word was audible, and that imperfectly. But it sounded like "Bolt."

"Why, you 're as bold as brass!" said Jonas, in the utmost admiration.

"A man can well afford to be as bold as brass, my good fellow, when he gets gold in exchange!" cried the chairman, with a laugh that shook him from head to foot. "You 'll dine with me to-morrow?"

"At what time?" asked Jonas.

"Seven. Here 's my card. Take the documents. I see you 'll join us!"

"I don't know about that," said Jonas. "There 's a good deal to be looked into first."

"You shall look," said Montague, slapping him on the back,

and then said, raising his voice: —

"Is Nadgett in the office there?"

"Here he is, sir." And he promptly entered [illegible] after him, as carefully as if h[illegible] [illegible] murder.

He was the man at a pound a week who made [illegible] It was no virtue or merit in Nadgett that he [illegible] Anglo-Bengalee business secretly and in the [illegible] for he was born to be a secret. He was a [illegible] [illegible] old man, who seemed to have [illegible] [illegible] body would have given him credit [illegible] [illegible] in his whole body. H[illegible] a secret; where he lived was a secret, and [illegible] was a secret. In his musty old pocket-book he [illegible] cards, in some of which he called him[illegible] [illegible] others a wine-merchant, in others a [illegible] [illegible] in others an accountant [illegible] the secret himself. He was [illegible] [illegible] city, and the other man [illegible] [illegible] He [illegible] 'Change for hours, [illegible] walked in and out, and would [illegible] [illegible] business coffee-rooms, in [illegible] drying a very damp [illegible] [illegible] and still looking over his [illegible] [illegible]

wax and a hieroglyphical old copper seal in his pocket, and often secretly indited letters in corner boxes of the trysting-places before mentioned; but they never appeared to go to anybody, for he would put them into a secret place in his coat, and deliver them to himself weeks afterwards, very much to his own surprise, quite yellow. He was that sort of man that if he had died worth a million of money, or had died worth twopence halfpenny, everybody would have been perfectly satisfied, and would have said it was just as they expected. And yet he belonged to a class; a race peculiar to the city; who are secrets as profound to one another as they are to the rest of mankind.

"Mr. Nadgett," said Montague, copying Jonas Chuzzlewit's address upon a piece of paper, from the card which was still lying on the table, "any information about this name I shall be glad to have myself. Don't you mind what it is. Any you can scrape together, bring me. Bring it *to me*, Mr. Nadgett."

Nadgett put on his spectacles, and read the name attentively; then looked at the chairman over his glasses and bowed; then took them off and put them in their case, and then put the case in his pocket. When he had done so, he looked, without his spectacles, at the paper as it lay before him, and at the same time produced his pocket-book from somewhere about the middle of his spine. Large as it was, it was very full of documents, but he found a place for this one; and having clasped it carefully, passed it by a kind of solemn legerdemain into the same region as before.

He withdrew with another bow and without a word; opening the door no wider than was sufficient for his passage out; and shutting it as carefully as before. The chairman of the board employed the rest of the morning in affixing his sign-manual of gracious acceptance to various new proposals of annuity purchase and insurance. The Company was looking up, for they flowed in gaily.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### MR. MONTAGUE AT HOME: AND MR. JONAS CHUZZLEWIT AT HOME.

There were many powerful reasons for Jonas Chuzzlewit being strongly prepossessed in favour of the scheme which its great originator had so boldly laid open to him; but three among them stood prominently forward. Firstly, there was money to be made by it. Secondly, the money had the peculiar charm of being sagaciously obtained at other people's cost. Thirdly, it involved much outward show of homage and distinction: a board being an awful institution in its own sphere, and a director a mighty man. "To make a swingeing profit, have a lot of chaps to order about, and get into regular good society by one and the same means, and them so easy to one's hand, ain't such a bad lookout," thought Jonas. The latter considerations were only second to his avarice; for, conscious that there was nothing in his person, conduct, character, or accomplishments to command respect, he was greedy of power, and was, in his heart, as much a tyrant as any laurelled conqueror on record.

But he determined to proceed with cunning and caution, and to be very keen in his observation of the gentility of Mr. Montague's private establishment. For it no more occurred to this shallow knave that Montague wanted him to be so, or he wouldn't have invited him while his decision was yet in abeyance, than the possibility of that genius being able to overreach him in any way, pierced through his self-conceit by the inlet of a needle's point. He had said, in the outset, that Jonas was too sharp for him: and Jonas, who would have been sharp enough to believe him in nothing else, though he had solemnly sworn it, believed him in that instantly.

It was with a faltering hand, and yet with an imbecile attempt at a swagger, that he knocked at his new friend's door in Pall Mall when the appointed hour arrived. Mr. Bailey quickly answered to the summons. He was not proud, and

was kindly disposed to take notice of Jonas; but Jonas had forgotten him.

"Mr. Montague at home?"

"I should hope he wos at home, and waiting dinner too," said Bailey, with the ease of an old acquaintance. "Will you take your hat up along with you, or leave it here?"

Mr. Jonas preferred leaving it there.

"The hold name, I suppose?" said Bailey, with a grin.

Mr. Jonas stared at him in mute indignation.

"What, don't you remember hold Mother Todgers's?" said Mr. Bailey, with his favourite action of the knees and boots. "Don't you remember my taking your name up to the young ladies, when you come a courting there? A reg'lar scaly old shop, warn't it? Times is changed, ain't they? I say, how you 've growed!"

Without pausing for any acknowledgment of this compliment, he ushered the visitor up stairs; and having announced him, retired with a private wink.

The lower story of the house was occupied by a wealthy tradesman, but Mr. Montague had all the upper portion, and splendid lodging it was. The room in which he received Jonas was a spacious and elegant apartment, furnished with extreme magnificence; decorated with pictures, copies from the antique in alabaster and marble, china vases, lofty mirrors, crimson hangings of the richest silk, gilded carvings, luxurious couches, glistening cabinets inlaid with precious woods; costly toys of every sort in negligent abundance. The only guests besides Jonas were the doctor, the resident Director, and two other gentlemen, whom Montague presented in due form.

"My dear friend, I am delighted to see you. Jobling you know, I believe?"

"I think so," said the doctor pleasantly, as he stepped out of the circle to shake hands. "I trust I have that honour. I hope so. My dear sir, I see you well? Quite well? *That* 's well!"

"Mr. Wolf," said Montague, as soon as the doctor would allow him to introduce the two others, "Mr. Chuzzlewit. Mr. Pip, Mr. Chuzzlewit."

Both gentlemen were exceedingly happy to have the honour of making Mr. Chuzzlewit's acquaintance. The doctor drew Jonas a little apart, and whispered behind his hand: —

of the world, my dear sir — men of the w
mr. Wolf — literary character — you need n't
markably clever weekly paper — oh, remarkably
— theatrical man — capital man to know — oh,

— Well!" said Wolf, folding his arms and resuming a
sation which the arrival of Jonas had interrupted. "
t did Lord Nobley say to that?"

"Why," returned Pip, with an oath, "he did n't know
say. Damme, sir, if he was n't as mute as a poker.
d know what a good fellow Nobley is!"

"The best fellow in the world!" cried Wolf. "It was
week that Nobley said to me, 'By Gad, Wolf, I've g
ng to bestow, and if you had but been brought up at
university, strike me blind if I would n't have made a pa
of you!"

"Just like him," said Pip with another oath. "And
have done it!"

"Not a doubt of it," said Wolf. "But you were go
tell us" —

"Oh yes!" cried Pip. "To be sure. So I was. A
he was dumb — sewn up, dead, sir — but after a
said to the Duke, 'Here's Pip. Ask Pip. P
friend. Ask Pip. He knows.' 'Damme!' 'I appeal to Pip then. Come Pip. Bandy
Speak out!' 'Bandy, your Grace, by the Lord Ha
I. 'Ha, ha!' laughed the Duke. 'T
Bravo, Pip. Well said, Pip. I wish I may
not a trump, Pip. Pop me down among y
visitors whenever I'm in town, Pip.' And so I
day."

The conclusion of this story gave immense satisfact
was in no degree lessened by the announcement
Jonas repaired to the dining-room, along with his
host, and took his seat at the board between that
and his friend the doctor. The rest fell into their
men who were well-accustomed to the house and
done full justice to by all parties.

It was as good a one as money or credit, no matter w
could produce. The dishes, wines, and fruits were
choicest kind. Everything was elegantly served — the

was gorgeous. Mr. Jonas was in the midst of a calculation of the value of this item alone, when his host disturbed him.

"A glass of wine?"

"Oh!" said Jonas, who had had several glasses already. "As much of that as you like! It 's too good to refuse."

"Well said, Mr. Chuzzlewit!" cried Wolf.

"Tom Gag, upon my soul!" said Pip.

"Positively, you know, that 's — ha, ha, ha!" observed the doctor, laying down his knife and fork for one instant, and then going to work again, pell-mell — "that 's epigrammatic; quite!"

"You 're tolerably comfortable, I hope?" said Tigg, apart to Jonas.

"Oh! You need n't trouble your head about *me*," he replied. "Famous!"

"I thought it best not to have a party," said Tigg. "You feel that?"

"Why, what do you call this?" retorted Jonas. "You don't mean to say you do this every day, do you?"

"My dear fellow," said Montague, shrugging his shoulders, "every day of my life, when I dine at home. This is my common style. It was of no use having anything uncommon for you. You 'd have seen through it. 'You 'll have a party?' said Crimple. 'No, I won't,' I said; 'he shall take us in the rough!'"

"And pretty smooth too, ecod!" said Jonas, glancing round the table. "This don't cost a trifle."

"Why, to be candid with you, it does not," returned the other. "But I like this sort of thing. It 's the way I spend my money."

Jonas thrust his tongue into his cheek, and said, "Was it?"

"When you join us, you won't get rid of your share of the profits in the same way?" said Tigg.

"Quite different," retorted Jonas.

"Well, and you 're right," said Tigg, with friendly candour. "You need n't. It 's not necessary. One of a Company must do it to hold the connection together; but, as I take a pleasure in it, that 's my department. You don't mind dining expensively at another man's expense, I hope?"

"Not a bit," said Jonas.

"Then I hope you 'll often dine with me?"

said Jonas, "I don't mind. On the contrary."

"And I'll never attempt to talk business to you ever a
take my oath," said Tigg. "Oh, deep, deep, deep of
s morning! I must tell 'em that. They're the very
enjoy it. Pip, my good fellow, I've a splendid little
tell you of my friend Chuzzlewit, who is the deepest d
ow; I give you my sacred word of honour he is the d
g I know, Pip!"

Pip swore a frightful oath that he was sure of it alw
d the anecdote, being told, was received with loud appl
, an incontestable proof of Mr. Jonas's greatness. Pip,
atural spirit of emulation, then related some instances
own depth; and Wolf, not to be left behind-hand, recited
leading points of one or two vastly humorous articles he
then preparing. These lucubrations, being of what he
"a warm complexion," were highly approved; and all the
pany agreed that they were full of point.

"Men of the world, my dear sir," Jobling whispered
Jonas; "thorough men of the world! To a professional
son like myself, it's quite refreshing to
society. It's not only agreeable — and
agreeable — but it's philosophically inspiriting. It
ter, my dear sir, character!"

It is so pleasant to find real merit appreciated, whatever
particular walk in life may be, that the general
company was doubtless much promoted by their
the two men of the world were held in great
upper classes of society, and by the gallant
country in the army and navy, but particularly
The least of their stories had a
plentiful as oaths, and even the Blood Royal
channel of their personal recollections.

"Mr. Chuzzlewit didn't know him, I'm afraid," said W
in reference to a certain personage of illustrious
had proved it by feature in a reminiscence.

"No," said Tigg. "But we must bring him
with this sort of fellows."

"He was very fond of literature," observed Wolf.

"Was he?" said Tigg.

"Oh, yes. He took my paper regularly for many years
y
he said some good things now and then." He

a certain Viscount, who 's a friend of mine — Pip knows him — 'What 's the editor's name, what 's the editor's name?' 'Wolf.' 'Wolf, eh? Sharp biter, Wolf. We must keep the wolf from the door, as the proverb says.' It was very well. And being complimentary, I printed it."

"But the Viscount 's the boy!" cried Pip, who invented a new oath for the introduction of every thing he said. "The Viscount 's the boy! He came into our place one night to take Her home, rather slued, but not much; and said, 'Where 's Pip? I want to see Pip. Produce Pip!' — 'What 's the row, my lord?' — 'Shakespeare 's an infernal humbug, Pip! What 's the good of Shakespeare, Pip? I never read him. What the devil is it all about, Pip? There 's a lot of feet in Shakespeare's verse, but there ain't any legs worth mentioning in Shakespeare's plays, are there, Pip? Juliet, Desdemona, Lady Macbeth, and all the rest of 'em, whatever their names are, might as well have no legs at all, for anything the audience know about it, Pip. Why, in that respect they 're all Miss Biffins to the audience, Pip. I 'll tell you what it is. What the people call dramatic poetry is a collection of sermons. Do I go to the theatre to be lectured? No, Pip. If I wanted that, I 'd go to church. What 's the legitimate object of the drama, Pip? Human nature. What are legs? Human nature. Then let us have plenty of leg pieces, Pip, and I 'll stand by you, my buck!' And I am proud to say," added Pip, "that he *did* stand by me handsomely."

The conversation now becoming general, Mr. Jonas's opinion was requested on this subject; and as it was in full accordance with the sentiments of Mr. Pip, that gentleman was extremely gratified. Indeed, both himself and Wolf had so much in common with Jonas, that they became very amicable; and between their increasing friendship and the fumes of wine, Jonas grew talkative.

It does not follow in the case of such a person that the more talkative he becomes, the more agreeable he is; on the contrary, his merits show to most advantage, perhaps, in silence. Having no means, as he thought, of putting himself on an equality with the rest, but by the assertion of that depth and sharpness on which he had been complimented, Jonas exhibited that faculty to the utmost; and was so deep and so sharp that he lost himself in his own profundity, and cut his fingers with his own edge-tools.

especially in his way and character to exhibit
his entertainer's expense; and while he drank of
wines, and partook of his monstrous profusion, to
extravagance which had set such costly fare be
Even at such a wanton board, and in such more
ubtful company, this might have proved a disagreeable ex
ent, but that Tigg and Crimple, studying to understand
n thoroughly, gave him what license he chose; knowing
more he took, the better for their purpose. And thus w
blundering cheat — gull that he was, for all his cunnin
ught himself rolled up h[illegible]ehog fashion, with his sher
nts towards them, he wa[illegible]n fact, betraying all his vul
e parts to their unwinking watchfulness.

Whether the two gentlemen who contributed so much to
doctor's philosophical knowledge (by the way, the doctor sli
off quietly, after swallowing his usual amount of wine) had
their cue distinctly from the host, or took it from what
saw and heard, they acted their parts very well. They sobe
the honour of Jonas's better acquaintance, trusted that
would have the pleasure of introducing him [illegible]
society in which he was so well qualified to [illegible]
him, in the most friendly manner, that the [illegible]
respective establishments were entirely at his [illegible]
word, they said "Be one of us!" And J[illegible]
finitely obliged to them, and he would be [illegible]
self, that so long as they "stood treat," there [illegible]
would like better.

After coffee, which was served in the drawing-room, [illegible]
was a short interval (mainly sustained by Pip and W[illegible]
versation, rather highly spiced and strongly [illegible]
it flagged, Jonas took it up and showed [illegible]
appraising the furniture, inquiring whether [illegible]
paid for, what it had originally cost, and the [illegible]
this, he was, as he considered, desperately hard [illegible]
and very demonstrative of his own brilliant parts.

Some champagne punch gave a new [illegible]
to the entertainments of the evening. For after [illegible]
some noisy proceedings, which were not at all [illegible]
ended in the unsteady departure of the two [illegible]
world, and the slumber of Mr. J[illegible]

As he could not be made to understand where he was [illegible]

Bailey received orders to call a hackney-coach, and take him home, which that young gentleman roused himself from an uneasy sleep in the hall to do; it being now almost three o'clock in the morning.

"Is he hooked, do you think?" whispered Crimple, as himself and partner stood in a distant part of the room observing him as he lay.

"Ay!" said Tigg, in the same tone. "With a strong iron, perhaps. Has Nadgett been here to-night?"

"Yes, I went out to him. Hearing you had company, he went away."

"Why did he do that?"

"He said he would come back early in the morning, before you were out of bed."

"Tell them to be sure and send him up to my bedside. Hush! Here's the boy! Now Mr. Bailey, take this gentleman home, and see him safely in. Hallo here! Why, Chuzzlewit, hallo!"

They got him upright with some difficulty, and assisted him down stairs, where they put his hat upon his head, and tumbled him into the coach. Mr. Bailey having shut him in, mounted the box beside the coachman, and smoked his cigar with an air of particular satisfaction; the undertaking in which he was engaged having a free and sporting character about it which was quite congenial to his taste.

Arriving in due time at the house in the city, Mr. Bailey jumped down, and expressed the lively nature of his feelings in a knock, the like of which had probably not been heard in that quarter since the great fire of London. Going out into the road to observe the effect of this feat, he saw that a dim light, previously visible at an upper window, had been already removed and was travelling down stairs. To obtain a foreknowledge of the bearer of this taper, Mr. Bailey skipped back to the door again, and put his eye to the keyhole.

It was the merry one herself. But sadly, strangely altered! So careworn and dejected, so faltering and full of fear, so fallen, humbled, broken, that to have seen her quiet in her coffin would have been a less surprise.

She set the light upon a bracket in the hall, and laid her hand upon her heart; upon her eyes; upon her burning head. Then she came on towards the door, with such a wild and hur-

...ust step, that Mr. Bailey lost his self-possession, and st... his eye where the keyhole had been, when she opened it.

"Aha!" said Mr. Bailey, with an effort. "There y... are you? What 's the matter? Ain't you well, though!

In the midst of her astonishment at the recognised ... his altered dress, so much of her old smile came back ... face that Bailey was glad. But next moment he was ... again, for he saw tears standing in her poor dim eyes.

"Don't be frightened," said Bailey. "There ain't ... the matter. I 've brought home Mr. Chuzzlewit. He ... He 's only a little swipey, you know." Mr. Bailey ... his boots, to express intoxication.

"Have you come from Mrs. Todgers's?" asked Merry bling.

"Todgers's, bless you! No!" cried Mr. Bailey. "I h... got nothing to do with Todgers's. I cut that connectio... ago. He 's been a dining with my governor at the ... Did n't you know he was a coming to see us?"

"No," she said faintly.

"Oh, yes! We 're heavy swells too, and ... Don't you come out, a catching cold in ... him!" And Mr. Bailey expressing in his ... confidence that he could carry him in with ease, ... opened the coach-door, let down the steps, and ... a shake, cried, "We 've got home, my ... then!"

He was so far recovered as to be able to ... peal, and to come stumbling out of the ... great hazard of Mr. Bailey's person. When ... pavement, Mr. Bailey first butted at him ... dexterously propped him up behind, and ... by these means, he assisted him into the house.

"You go up first with the light," said Bailey ... "and we 'll follow. Don't tremble so. He ... When I 've had a drop too much, I 'm full ... self."

She went on before, and her husband and ... of stumbling over each other, and knocking ... got at last into the sitting-room above stairs, ... were put into a seat.

"There!" said Mr. Bailey. "He 's all right ...

got nothing to cry for, bless you! He 's righter than a
:!"
ıe ill-favoured brute, with dress awry, and sodden face
rumpled hair, sat blinking and drooping, and rolling his
ic eyes about, until, becoming conscious by degrees, he
nised his wife, and shook his fist at her.
\h!" cried Mr. Bailey, squaring his arms with a sudden
ion. "What, you 're wicious, are you? Would you
gh! You 'd better not!"
?ray go away!" said Merry. "Bailey, my good boy, go
. Jonas!" she said, timidly laying her hand upon his
der, and bending her head down over him; "Jonas!"
Look at her!" cried Jonas, pushing her off with his ex-
d arm. "Look here! Look at her! Here 's a bargain
man!"
)ear Jonas!"
)ear Devil!" he replied, with a fierce gesture. "You 're
tty clog to be tied to a man for life, you mewling white-
cat! Get out of my sight!"
know you don't mean it, Jonas. You would n't say it
ı were sober."
ith affected gaiety she gave Bailey a piece of money, and
implored him to be gone. Her entreaty was so earnest,
he boy had not the heart to stay there. But he stopped
e bottom of the stairs, and listened.
would n't say it if I was sober!" retorted Jonas. "You
better. Have I never said it when I was sober?"
)ften, indeed!" she answered through her tears.
Hark ye!" cried Jonas, stamping his foot upon the ground.
ı made me bear your pretty humours once, and ecod I 'll
you bear mine now. I always promised myself I would.
rried you that I might. I 'll know who 's master, and
's slave!"
Heaven knows I am obedient!" said the sobbing girl.
ch more so than I ever thought to be!"
nas laughed in his drunken exultation. "What! you 're
ıg it out, are you! Patience, and you will in time!
ıns have claws, my girl. There 's not a pretty slight you
put upon me, nor a pretty trick you ever played me, nor
tty insolence you ever showed me, that I won't pay back
I.

a [illegible] What else did I marry you for? *You*, too!" [illegible]

[illegible] — indeed it might — to hear her [illegible] to say he liked; try[illegible] back.

"[illegible] You don't hear [illegible] I hate you. I hate [illegible] to strap a pack upon my [illegible] whenever I choose. [illegible] so that I might marry [illegible] I'd keep single. I [illegible] among the friends *I* know. Instead of [illegible] Pah! Why do you [illegible] Am I never to for[illegible]"

"[illegible]" she said cheerfully: opening the shutter, [illegible] "Broad day, Jonas!"

"[illegible] what do *I* care!" was the kind [illegible]

"[illegible] passed quickly, too. I don't mind sitting up, [illegible]"

"[illegible]!" growled Jonas.

"[illegible] all night long. I began [illegible] came home again. The [illegible] And true the book says. I'll tell it [illegible]"

"[illegible]" said Jonas doggedly.

"[illegible]"

"[illegible] anything in it about a man's being determined [illegible] break her spirit, bend her temper, crush [illegible] many nutshells — kill her, for aught I [illegible]"

"[illegible]" she answered quickly.

[illegible] "That'll be a true story, though, [illegible] the book says nothing about it. It's a [illegible] A fit book for a lying reader. But you're [illegible]"

There was an interval of silence: and the boy was [illegible] when he heard her footstep on the floor, and [illegible] She went up to him as it seemed, and spoke lov[illegible] saying that she would defer to him in everything, and

consult his wishes and obey them, and they might be
ppy if he would be gentle with her. He answered
imprecation, and —
with a blow? Yes. Stern truth against the base-
illain, with a blow.
ngry cries; no loud reproaches. Even her weeping and
s were stifled by her clinging round him. She only
peating it in agony of heart, How could he, could he,
e — and lost utterance in tears.
woman, God beloved in old Jerusalem! The best
us need deal lightly with thy faults, if only for the
nent thy nature will endure, in bearing heavy evidence
us, on the Day of Judgment!

## CHAPTER XXIX

[illegible]CH SOME PEOPLE ARE PRECOCIOUS, OTHERS PROFESSIONAL, [illegible] OTHERS MYSTERIOUS; [illegible]N THEIR SEVERAL WAYS.

[illegible] may have been the restless remembrance of what he had [illegible]nd heard over-night, or it may have been no deeper [illegible] operation than the discovery that he had nothing to do, [illegible] caused Mr. Bailey, on the following afternoon, to feel [illegible]ularly disposed for agreeable society, and prompted him [illegible]y a visit to his friend Poll Sweedlepipe.

On the little bell giving clamorous notice of a visitor's approach (for Mr. Bailey came in at the door with a lunge, to get as much sound out of the bell as possible), Poll Sweedlepipe desisted from the contemplation of a fav[illegible] gave his young friend hearty welcome.

"Why, you look smarter by day," said Poll, [illegible] by candle-light. I never see such a tight y[illegible]

"Reether so, Polly. How's our fair friend S[illegible]

"Oh, she's pretty well," said Poll. "She [illegible]

"There's the remains of a fine woman about S[illegible] observed Mr. Bailey with genteel indifference.

"Oh!" thought Poll, "he's old. He [illegible]

"T[illegible] much cromb, you know," said Mr. Ba[illegible] Poll. But there's many worse at her time of life.

"The very owl's a opening his eyes!" thought P[illegible] don't wonder at it, in a bird of his opinions."

He happened to have been sharpening his raz[illegible] lying open in a row, while a huge strop dangled [illegible] Glancing at these preparations, Mr. Bailey [illegible] and a thought appeared to occur to him.

"Poll," he said, "I ain't as neat as I could wish [illegible] gills. Being here, I may as well have a shave, [illegible] trimmed [illegible]"

The barber stood aghast, but Mr. Bailey divested [illegible] of his neckcloth, and sat down in the easy shaving chair [illegible]

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all the dignity and confidence in life. There was no resisting his manner. The evidence of sight and touch became as nothing. His chin was as smooth as a new-laid egg or a scraped Dutch cheese; but Poll Sweedlepipe would n't have ventured to deny, on affidavit, that he had the beard of a Jewish Rabbi.

"Go *with* the grain, Poll, all round, please," said Mr. Bailey, screwing up his face for the reception of the lather. "You may do wot you like with the bits of whisker. I don't care for 'em."

The meek little barber stood gazing at him with the brush and soap-dish in his hand, stirring them round and round in a ludicrous uncertainty, as if he were disabled by some fascination from beginning. At last he made a dash at Mr. Bailey's cheek. Then he stopped again, as if the ghost of a beard had suddenly receded from his touch; but receiving mild encouragement from Mr. Bailey in the form of an adjuration to "Go in and win," he lathered him bountifully. Mr. Bailey smiled through the suds in his satisfaction.

"Gently over the stones, Poll. Go a tiptoe over the pimples!"

Poll Sweedlepipe obeyed, and scraped the lather off again with particular care. Mr. Bailey squinted at every successive dab, as it was deposited on a cloth on his left shoulder, and seemed, with a microscopic eye, to detect some bristles in it; for he murmured more than once, "Reether redder than I could wish, Poll." The operation being concluded, Paul fell back and stared at him again, while Mr. Bailey, wiping his face on the jack-towel, remarked, "that arter late hours nothing freshened up a man so much as a easy shave."

He was in the act of tying his cravat at the glass, without his coat, and Poll had wiped his razor, ready for the next customer, when Mrs. Gamp, coming down stairs, looked in at the shop-door to give the barber neighbourly good day. Feeling for her unfortunate situation, in having conceived a regard for himself which it was not in the nature of things that he could return, Mr. Bailey hastened to soothe her with words of kindness.

"Hallo!" he said, "Sairah! I need n't ask you how you 've been this long time, for you 're in full bloom. All a blowin' and a growin'; ain't she, Polly?"

"Hear the Bragian boldness of that boy!" cried Mrs. Gamp, not displeased. "What a imperent young sparrow! I would n't be that creetur's mother, not for fifty pound!"

Mr. Bailey regarded this as a delicate confession of her attachment, and a hint that no pecuniary gain could recompense her for its being rendered hopeless. He felt flattered. Disinterested affection is always flattering.

"Ah dear!" moaned Mrs. Gamp, sinking into the shaving chair, "that there blessed Bull, Mr. Sweedlepipe, has done his best to conker me. Of all the trying inwalieges in this walley of the shadder, that one beats 'em black and blue."

It was the practice of Mrs. Gamp and her friends in the profession to say this of all the easy customers; as having at once the effect of discouraging competitors for office, and accounting for the necessity of high living on the part of the nurses.

"Talk of constitooshun!" Mrs. Gamp observed. "A person's constitooshun need be made of Bricks to stand it. Mrs. Harris jestly says to me, but t'other day, 'Oh! Sairey Gamp,' she says, 'how is it done?' 'Mrs. Harris, ma'am,' I says to her, 'we gives no trust ourselves, and puts a [illegible] vere, these is our religious feelin's, and we finds 'em answer.' 'Sairey,' says Mrs. Harris, 'sech is life. Vich likeways is the hend of all things!'"

The barber gave a soft murmur, as much as to say that Mrs. Harris's remark, though perhaps not quite so clear as could be desired from such an authority, did equal honour to her head and to her heart.

"And here," continued Mrs. Gamp, "and here am I a-goin' twenty mile in distant, on as wentersome a [illegible] one as mortial ever run, I do believe. Says Mrs. Harris, with a woman's and a mother's 'art a-beatin' in her breast, says she to me, 'You're not a-goin', Sairey, Lord forgive you!' 'Why am I not a-goin', Mrs. Harris?' I replies. 'Mrs. Gill,' I says, 'wos never wrong with six; and is it likely, ma'am — I ask you as a mother — that she will begin to be unreg'lar now? Often and often have I heerd him say,' I says to Mrs. Harris, meaning Mr. Gill, 'that he would back his wife agen Moore's almanack, to name the very day and hour, for ninepence farden. Is it likely, ma'am,' I says, "

she will fail this once?' Says Mrs. Harris, 'No, ma'am, not in the course of nater. But,' she says, the tears a fillin' in her eyes, 'you knows much betterer than me, with your experienge, how little puts us out. A Punch's show,' she says, 'a chimbley sweep, a newfundlan' dog, or a drunkin man a comin' round the corner sharp, may do it.' So it may, Mr. Sweedlepipes," said Mrs. Gamp, "there's no deniging of it; and though my books is clear for full a week, I takes a anxious 'art along with me, I do assure you, sir."

"You're so full of zeal, you see!" said Poll. "You worrit yourself so."

"Worrit myself!" cried Mrs. Gamp, raising her hands and turning up her eyes. "You speak the truth in that, sir, if you never speaks no more, 'twixt this and when two Sundays jines together. I feels the sufferin's of other people more than I feels my own, though no one may n't suppoge it. The families I've had," said Mrs. Gamp, "if all was knowed, and credit done where credit's doo, would take a week to chris'en at St. Polge's fontin!"

"Where's the patient goin'?" asked Sweedlepipe.

"Into Har'fordshire, which is his native air. But native airs nor native graces neither," Mrs. Gamp observed, "won't bring *him* round."

"So bad as that?" inquired the wistful barber. "Indeed!"

Mrs. Gamp shook her head mysteriously, and pursed up her lips. "There's fevers of the mind," she said, "as well as body. You may take your slime draughts till you flies into the air with efferwescence; but you won't cure that."

"Ah!" said the barber, opening his eyes, and putting on his raven aspect, "Lor!"

"No. You may make yourself as light as any gash balloon," said Mrs. Gamp. "But talk, when you're wrong in your head and when you're in your sleep, of certain things; and you 'll be heavy in your mind."

"Of what kind of things now?" inquired Poll, greedily biting his nails in his great interest. "Ghosts?"

Mrs. Gamp, who perhaps had been already tempted further than she had intended to go, by the barber's stimulating curiosity, gave a sniff of uncommon significance, and said, it did n't signify.

"I'm a going down with my patient in the coach this arter-

roceeded. "I 'm a going to stop with him a day
[illegible] gets a country nuss (drat them country nusses,
[illegible] or card hussies knows about their bis'ness); and then
[illegible]min' back; and that 's my trouble, Mr. Sweedlepipe.
[illegible] that everythink 'll only go on right and comfortable
[illegible] 'm away; perwisin' which, as Mrs. Harris says,
[illegible] welcome to choose her own time; all times of the
[illegible] night bein' equally the same to me."
[illegible]ng the progr[illegible] going remarks, which Mrs.
had addressed exclusivel[illegible] the barber, Mr. Bailey had
ing his cravat, getti[illegible] coat, and making hideous
himself in the glass. [illegible] now personally addressed by
[illegible]mp, he turned rou[illegible] mingled in the conversation.
[illegible] ain't been in the [illegible] ppose, sir, since we was all
there together," sa[illegible] Gamp, "at Mr. Chuzzle-
[illegible]"

"Yes I have, Sairah. I was there last night."

"Last night!" cried the barber.

"Yes, Poll, reether so. You can call it this morning if you like to be particular. He dined with us."

"Who does that young Limb mean by 'hus'?" said Mrs. Gamp, with most impatient emphasis.

"Me and my Governor, Sairah. He dined at [illegible] We wos very merry, Sairah. So much so that I [illegible] to see him home in a hackney-coach at three [illegible] morning." It was on the tip of the boy's tongue [illegible] what had followed, but remembering how easily [illegible] carried to his master's ears, and the repeated [illegible] had from Mr. Crimple "not to chatter," he [illegible] adding only, "She was sitting up, expecting him."

"And all things considered," said Mrs. Gamp [illegible] might have knowed better than to go a tiring herself [illegible] doin' anythink of the sort. Did they seem pretty [illegible] together, sir?"

"Oh, yes," answered Bailey, "pleasant enough."

"I 'm glad on it," said Mrs. Gamp, with a second [illegible] significance.

"They haven't been married so long," observed [illegible] his hands, "that they need be anything but pleasant [illegible] awhile."

"No," said Mrs. Gamp, with a third significant [illegible]

"Especially," pursued the barber, "when the gentleman bears such a character as you gave him."

"I speak as I find, Mr. Sweedlepipes," said Mrs. Gamp. "Forbid it should be otherways! But we never knows wot 's hidden in each other's hearts; and if we had glass winders there, we 'd need to keep the shetters up, some on us, I do assure you!"

"But you don't mean to say —" Poll Sweedlepipe began.

"No," said Mrs. Gamp, cutting him very short, "I don't. Don't think I do. The torters of the Imposition should n't make me own I did. All I says is," added the good woman rising and folding her shawl about her, "that the Bull 's a waitin', and the precious moments is a flyin' fast."

The little barber, having in his eager curiosity a great desire to see Mrs. Gamp's patient, proposed to Mr. Bailey that they should accompany her to the Bull, and witness the departure of the coach. That young gentleman assenting, they all went out together.

Arriving at the tavern, Mrs. Gamp (who was full-dressed for the journey, in her latest suit of mourning) left her friends to entertain themselves in the yard, while she ascended to the sick room, where her fellow-labourer Mrs. Prig was dressing the invalid.

He was so wasted that it seemed as if his bones would rattle when they moved him. His cheeks were sunken, and his eyes unnaturally large. He lay back in the easy-chair like one more dead than living; and rolled his languid eyes towards the door when Mrs. Gamp appeared, as painfully as if their weight alone were burdensome to move.

"And how are we by this time?" Mrs. Gamp observed. "We looks charming."

"We looks a deal charminger than we are, then," returned Mrs. Prig, a little chafed in her temper. "We got out of bed back'ards, I think, for we 're as cross as two sticks. I never see sich a man. He would n't have been washed, if he 'd had his own way."

"She put the soap in my mouth," said the unfortunate patient feebly.

"Could n't you keep it shut, then?" retorted Mrs. Prig. "Who do you think 's to wash one feater, and miss another, and wear one's eyes out with all manner of fine work of that

for half a crown a day! If you wants to be ti... ...n, you must pay accordin'."

Oh, dear me!" cried the patient; "oh, dear, dear."

"There!" said Mrs. Prig, "that 's the way he 's bee... ...ducting of himself, Sarah, ever since I got him out of b... ...you 'll believe it."

"Instead of being grateful," Mrs. Gamp observed, "fo... ...little ways. Oh, fie for shame, sir, fie for shame!"

...ere Mrs. Prig seized the patient by the chin, and bega... ...p his unhappy head with a hair-brush.

"I suppose you don't like that, neither!" she obser... ...pping to look at him.

It was just possible that he didn't, for the brush wa... ...specimen of the hardest kind of instrument producible ... ...modern art; and his very eyelids were red with the fricti... Mrs. Prig was gratified to observe the correctness of her sup... ...sition, and said triumphantly, "she knowed as much."

When his hair was smoothed down comfortably [illegible] eyes, Mrs. Prig and Mrs. Gamp put on his neck-[illegible] ing his shirt-collar with great nicety, [illegible] points should also invade those organs, [illegible] an artificial ophthalmia. His waist[illegible] arranged; and [illegible] every button was [illegible] button-hole, and the order of his boots [illegible] sented on the whole rather a melancholy [illegible]

"I don't think it 's right," said the [illegible] feel [illegible] if I was [illegible] somebody else [illegible] [illegible] Th[illegible] pocket, too. What [illegible] [illegible]"

"D[illegible] the man!" cried Mrs. G[illegible] "If he [illegible] and got [illegible] right [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] Betsey! You 'll find [illegible] [illegible] other pocket [illegible] [illegible] take [illegible]"

B[illegible] [illegible] Mrs. [illegible] [illegible] own pocket, which was [illegible] p[illegible] Refreshment then arrived [illegible] the [illegible] strong ale for the ladies, and a basin of beef-tea [illegible]

tient; which refection was barely at an end when John Westlock appeared.

"Up and dressed!" cried John, sitting down beside him. "That 's brave. How do you feel?"

"Much better. But very weak."

"No wonder. You have had a hard bout of it. But country air, and change of scene," said John, "will make another man of you! Why, Mrs. Gamp," he added laughing, as he kindly arranged the sick man's garments, "you have odd notions of a gentleman's dress!"

"Mr. Lewsome ain't a easy gent to get into his clothes, sir," Mrs. Gamp replied with dignity; "as me and Betsey Prig can certify afore the Lord Mayor and Uncommon Counsellors, if needful!"

John was at that moment standing close in front of the sick man, in the act of releasing him from the torture of the collars before mentioned, when he said in a whisper: —

"Mr. Westlock! I don't wish to be overheard. I have something very particular and strange to say to you; something that has been a dreadful weight on my mind, through this long illness."

Quick in all his motions, John was turning round to desire the women to leave the room; when the sick man held him by the sleeve.

"Not now. I 've not the strength. I 've not the courage. May I tell it when I have? May I write it, if I find that easier and better?"

"May you!" cried John. "Why, Lewsome, what is this!"

"Don't ask me what it is. It 's unnatural and cruel. Frightful to think of. Frightful to tell. Frightful to know. Frightful to have helped in. Let me kiss your hand for all your goodness to me. Be kinder still, and don't ask me what it is!"

At first, John gazed at him, in great surprise; but remembering how very much reduced he was, and how recently his brain had been on fire with fever, believed that he was labouring under some imaginary horror, or despondent fancy. For further information on this point, he took an opportunity of drawing Mrs. Gamp aside, while Betsey Prig was wrapping him in cloaks and shawls, and asked her whether he was quite collected in his mind.

"Oh, bless you, no!" said Mrs. Gamp. "He hates his nusses to this hour. They always does it, sir. It's a certain sign. If you could have heerd the poor dear soul a findin' fault with me and Betsey Prig, not half an hour ago, you would have wondered how it is we don't get fretted to the tomb."

This almost confirmed John in his suspicion; so, not taking what had passed into any serious account, he resumed his former cheerful manner, and, assisted by Mrs. Gamp and Betsey Prig, conducted Lewsome down stairs to the coach, just then upon the point of starting.

Poll Sweedlepipe was at the door with his arms tight folded and his eyes wide open, and looked on with absorbing interest, while the sick man was slowly moved into the vehicle. His bony hands and haggard face impressed Poll wonderfully; and he informed Mr. Bailey, in confidence, that he would n't have missed seeing him for a pound. Mr. Bailey, who was of a different constitution, remarked that he would have stayed away for five shillings.

It was a troublesome matter to adjust Mrs. Gamp's luggage to her satisfaction; for every package belonging to that lady had the inconvenient property of requiring to be put in a boot by itself, and to have no other luggage near it, on pain of actions at law for heavy damages against the proprietors of the coach. The umbrella with the circular patch was particularly hard to be got rid of, and several times thrust out its battered brass nozzle from improper crevices and chinks, to the great terror of the other passengers. Indeed, in her intense anxiety to find a haven of refuge for this chattel, Mrs. Gamp so often moved it, in the course of five minutes, that it seemed not one umbrella but fifty. At length it was lost, or said to be; and for the next five minutes she was face to face with the coachman go wherever he might, protesting that it should be "made good," though she took the question to the House of Commons.

At last, her bundle, and her pattens, and her basket, and everything else, being disposed of, she took a friendly leave of Poll and Mr. Bailey, dropped a curtsey to John Westlock, and parted as from a cherished member of the sisterhood with Betsey Prig.

"Wishin' you lots of sickness, my darling creetur," Mrs. Gamp observed, "and good places. It won't be long, I hope,

afore we works together, off and on, again, Betsey; and may our next meetin' be at a large family's, where they all takes it reg'lar, one from another, turn and turn about, and has it business-like."

"I don't care how soon it is," said Mrs. Prig; "nor how many weeks it lasts."

Mrs. Gamp with a reply in a congenial spirit was backing to the coach, when she came in contact with a lady and gentleman who were passing along the footway.

"Take care, take care here!" cried the gentleman. — "Halloo! My dear! Why, it's Mrs. Gamp!"

"What, Mr. Mould!" exclaimed the nurse. "And Mrs. Mould! who would have thought as we should ever have a meetin' here, I'm sure!"

"Going out of town, Mrs. Gamp?" cried Mould. "That's unusual, is n't it?"

"It *is* unusual, sir," said Mrs. Gamp; "but only for a day or two at most. The gent," she whispered, "as I spoke about."

"What, in the coach!" cried Mould. "The one you thought of recommending? Very odd. My dear, this will interest you. The gentleman that Mrs. Gamp thought likely to suit us is in the coach, my love."

Mrs. Mould was greatly interested.

"Here, my dear. You can stand upon the door-step," said Mould, "and take a look at him. Ha! There he is. Where's my glass? Oh! all right, I've got it. Do you see him, my dear?"

"Quite plain," said Mrs. Mould.

"Upon my life, you know, this is a very singular circumstance," said Mould, quite delighted. "This is the sort of thing, my dear, I would n't have missed on any account. It tickles one. It's interesting. It's almost a little play, you know. Ah! There he is! To be sure. Looks poorly, Mrs. M., don't he?"

Mrs. Mould assented.

"He's coming our way, perhaps, after all," said Mould. "Who knows! I feel as if I ought to show him some little attention, really. He don't seem a stranger to me. I'm very much inclined to move my hat, my dear."

"He's looking hard this way," said Mrs. Mould.

"Then I will!" cried Mould. "How d' ye do, sir? I

[illegible] ood day. Ha! He bows, too. Very gentleman[illegible] Gamp has the cards in her pocket, I have no dou[illegible] is very singular, my dear — and very pleasant. I am [illegible] stitious, but it really seems as if one was destined to [illegible] those little melancholy civilities which belong to our pe[illegible] line of business. There can be no kind of objection [illegible] issing your hand to him, my dear."

[illegible] Mould did so.

[illegible] ha!" said Mould. "He's evidently gratified. Poor [illegible] r! I'm quite glad you did it, my love. Bye-bye, M[illegible] mp!" waving his hand. "There he goes; there he goes!" So he did; for the coach rolled off as the words were spoke[illegible] r. and Mrs. Mould, in high good-humour, went their me[illegible] ay. Mr. Bailey retired with Poll Sweedlepipe as soon [illegible] possible; but some little time elapsed before he could rem[illegible] his friend from the ground, owing to the impression wrong[illegible] upon the barber's nerves by Mrs. Prig, whom he pronounc[illegible] in admiration of her beard, to be a woman of transcend[illegible] charms.

When the light cloud of bustle hanging [illegible] thus dispersed, Nadgett was seen in the [illegible] Bull coffee-room, looking wistfully up at the [illegible] man who never appeared were a little behind his time.

## CHAPTER XXX

PROVES THAT CHANGES MAY BE RUNG IN THE BEST-REGULATED FAMILIES, AND THAT MR. PECKSNIFF WAS A SPECIAL HAND AT A TRIPLE-BOB-MAJOR.

As the surgeon's first care after amputating a limb is to take up the arteries the cruel knife has severed, so it is the duty of this history, which in its remorseless course has cut from the Pecksniffian trunk its right arm, Mercy, to look to the parent stem, and see how in all its various ramifications it got on without her.

And first of Mr. Pecksniff, it may be observed, that having provided for his younger daughter that choicest of blessings, a tender and indulgent husband; and having gratified the dearest wish of his parental heart by establishing her in life so happily; he renewed his youth, and, spreading the plumage of his own bright conscience, felt himself equal to all kinds of flights. It is customary with fathers in stage-plays, after giving their daughters to the men of their hearts, to congratulate themselves on having no other business on their hands but to die immediately, though it is rarely found that they are in a hurry to do it. Mr. Pecksniff, being a father of a more sage and practical class, appeared to think that his immediate business was to live; and having deprived himself of one comfort, to surround himself with others.

But however much inclined the good man was to be jocose and playful, and in the garden of his fancy to disport himself (if one may say so) like an architectural kitten, he had one impediment constantly opposed to him. The gentle Cherry, stung by a sense of slight and injury, which, far from softening down or wearing out, rankled and festered in her heart — the gentle Cherry was in flat rebellion. She waged fierce war against her dear papa; she led her parent what is usually called, for want of a better figure of speech, the life of a dog. But never did that dog live, in kennel, stable-yard, or house,

[illegible] was half so hard as Mr. Pecksniff's with his [illegible]

[illegible] er and daughter were sitting at their breakfa[illegible] [illegible] ired, and they were alone. Mr. Pecksniff frown[illegible] but having cleared his brow, looked stealthily at [illegible] Her nose was very red, indeed, and screwed up tig[illegible] [illegible]ostile preparation.

[illegible]," cried Mr. Pecksniff, "what is amiss between [illegible] why are we disunited?"

[illegible] Pecksniff's answer was scarcely a response to this [illegible] [illegible]fection, for it was simply, "Bother, Pa!"

"Bother!" repeated Mr. Pecksniff, in a tone of anguish.

"Oh! 't is too late, Pa," said his daughter calmly, "to ta[illegible] me like that. I know what it means, and what its val[illegible]"

"This is hard!" cried Mr. Pecksniff, addressing his brea[illegible] fast-cup. "This is very hard! She is my child. I carri[illegible] her in my arms, when she wore shapeless worsted shoes — might say, mufflers — many years ago!"

"You need n't taunt me with that, Pa," [illegible] with a spiteful look. "I am not so many years [illegible] sister, either, though she is married to your [illegible]"

"Ah, human nature, human nature!" [illegible] said Mr. Pecksniff, shaking his head at [illegible] did n't belong to it. "To think that this [illegible] from such a cause! oh dear, oh dear!"

"From such a cause, indeed!" cried Cherry. [illegible] real cause, Pa, or I'll state it myself. Mind! I [illegible]

Perhaps the energy with which she said this [illegible] However that may be, Mr. Pecksniff changed [illegible] expression of his face, for one of anger if not [illegible] lence, when he said:

"You will! you have. You did yesterday. Y[illegible] [illegible] You have no decency, you make [illegible] [illegible] you have exposed yourself to Mr. [illegible]"

"[illegible]," cried Cherry, with a bitter smile. [illegible] I [illegible]"

"[illegible]," said Mr. Pecksniff.

H[illegible] answered with a scornful laugh.

"And since we have come to an explanation, Charity [illegible]

Mr. Pecksniff, rolling his head portentously, "let me tell you that I won't allow it. None of your nonsense, miss! I won't permit it to be done."

"I shall do," said Charity, rocking her chair backwards and forwards, and raising her voice to a high pitch, "I shall do, Pa, what I please, and what I have done. I am not going to be crushed in everything, depend upon it. I've been more shamefully used than anybody ever was in this world," here she began to cry and sob, "and may expect the worst treatment from you, I know. But I don't care for that. No, I don't!"

Mr. Pecksniff was made so desperate by the loud tone in which she spoke that, after looking about him in frantic uncertainty for some means of softening it, he rose and shook her until the ornamental bow of hair upon her head nodded like a plume. She was so very much astonished by this assault that it really had the desired effect.

"I'll do it again!" cried Mr. Pecksniff, as he resumed his seat, and fetched his breath, "if you dare to talk in that loud manner. How do you mean about being shamefully used? If Mr. Jonas chose your sister in preference to you, who could help it, I should wish to know? What have *I* to do with it?"

"Was n't I made a convenience of? Were n't my feelings trifled with? Did n't he address himself to me first?" sobbed Cherry, clasping her hands; "and, oh good gracious, that I should live to be shook!"

"You 'll live to be shaken again," returned her parent, "if you drive me to that means of maintaining the decorum of this humble roof. You surprise me. I wonder you have not more spirit. If Mr. Jonas did n't care for you, how could you wish to have him?"

"*I* wish to have him!" exclaimed Cherry. "*I* wish to have him, Pa!"

"Then what are you making all this piece of work for," retorted her father, "if you did n't wish to have him?"

"Because I was treated with duplicity," said Cherry; "and because my own sister and my own father conspired against me. I am not angry with *her*," said Cherry, looking much more angry than ever. "I pity her. I 'm sorry for her. I know the fate that 's in store for her with that Wretch."

"Mr. Jonas will survive your calling him a wretch, my

[illegible]re say," said Mr. Pecksniff, with returning [illegible] [illegible] call him what you like and make an end of it."

[illegible] an end, Pa," said Charity. "No, not an [illegible] [illegible] not the only point on which we're not agreed. [illegible]n't submit to it. It's better you should know that [illegible]ce. No; I won't submit to it, indeed, Pa! I am not [illegible] fool, and I am not blind. All I have got to say is, I w[illegible] [illegible]bmit to it."

Whatever she meant, she shook Mr. Pecksniff now; for [illegible] attempt to seem composed was melancholy in the [illegible] degree. His anger changed to meekness, and his words [illegible] mild and fawning.

"My dear," he said; "if in the short excitement of an [illegible] moment I resorted to any unjustifiable means of suppressi[illegible] little outbreak calculated to injure you as well as myself — [illegible] possible I may have done so; perhaps I did — I ask your [illegible]don. A father asking pardon of his child," said Mr. P[illegible]sniff, "is, I believe, a spectacle to soften the most ru[illegible] nature."

But it didn't at all soften Miss Pecksniff, [illegible] her nature was not rugged enough. On the [illegible] [illegible]sisted in saying, over and over again, that she [illegible] fool, and wasn't blind, and wouldn't submit [illegible]

"You labour under some mistake, my [illegible] Pecksniff, "but I will not ask you what it is. I [illegible] to know. No, pray!" he added, holding [illegible] [illegible] again, "let us avoid the subject, [illegible] it is!"

"It's quite right that the subject should be [illegible] us, sir," said Cherry. "But I wish to be [illegible] [illegible]gether, and consequently must beg you to [illegible] home."

Mr. Pecksniff looked about the room, and said, "A[illegible] my child!"

"Another home, Papa," said Cherry with [illegible] "Place me at Mrs. Todgers's, [illegible] [illegible] but I will not live here, if [illegible]

It is possible that Miss Pecksniff saw in Mrs. T[illegible] [illegible] men, panting to fall [illegible] [illegible] It is possible that Mr. Pecksniff, in his new [illegible]

nility, saw in the suggestion of that same establishment, an easy means of relieving himself from an irksome charge in the way of temper and watchfulness. It is undoubtedly a fact that, in the attentive ears of Mr. Pecksniff, the proposition did not sound quite like the dismal knell of all his hopes.

But he was a man of great feeling and acute sensibility; and he squeezed his pocket-handkerchief against his eyes with both hands — as such men always do; especially when they are observed. "One of my birds," Mr. Pecksniff said, "has left me for the stranger's breast; the other would take wing to Todgers's! Well, well, what am I? I don't know what I am, exactly. Never mind!"

Even this remark, made more pathetic, perhaps, by his breaking down in the middle of it, had no effect upon Charity. She was grim, rigid, and inflexible.

"But I have ever," said Mr. Pecksniff, "sacrificed my children's happiness to my own — I mean my own happiness to my children's — and I will not begin to regulate my life by other rules of conduct now. If you can be happier at Mrs. Todgers's than in your father's house, my dear, go to Mrs. Todgers's! Do not think of me, my girl!" said Mr. Pecksniff, with emotion; "I shall get on pretty well, no doubt."

Miss Charity, who knew he had a secret pleasure in the contemplation of the proposed change, suppressed her own, and went on to negotiate the terms. His views upon this subject were at first so very limited that another difference, involving possibly another shaking, threatened to ensue; but by degrees they came to something like an understanding, and the storm blew over. Indeed, Miss Charity's idea was so agreeable to both that it would have been strange if they had not come to an amicable agreement. It was soon arranged between them that the project should be tried, and that immediately; and that Cherry's not being well, and needing change of scene, and wishing to be near her sister, should form the excuse for her departure, to Mr. Chuzzlewit and Mary, to both of whom she had pleaded indisposition for some time past. These premises agreed on, Mr. Pecksniff gave her his blessing, with all the dignity of a self-denying man who had made a hard sacrifice, but comforted himself with the reflection that virtue is its own reward. Thus they were reconciled for the first time since that not easily forgiven night, when Mr. Jonas, repudiating

the elder, had confessed his passion for the younger sister, and Mr. Pecksniff had abetted him on moral grounds.

But how happened it — in the name of an unexpected addition to that small family, the Seven Wonders of the World, whatever and wherever they may be — how happened it that Mr. Pecksniff and his daughter were about to part? How happened it that their mutual relations were so greatly altered! Why was Miss Pecksniff so clamorous to have it understood that she was neither blind nor foolish, and she would n't bear it? It is not possible that Mr. Pecksniff had any thoughts of marrying again! or that his daughter, with the sharp eye of a single woman, fathomed his design.

Let us inquire into this.

Mr. Pecksniff, as a man without reproach, from whom the breath of slander passed like common breath from any other polished surface, could afford to do what common men could not. He knew the purity of his own motives; and when he had a motive worked at it as only a very good man (or a very bad one) can. Did he set before himself any strong and palpable motives for taking a second wife? Yes; and not one or two of them, but a combination of very many.

Old Martin Chuzzlewit had gradually undergone an important change. Even upon the night when he made such an ill-timed arrival at Mr. Pecksniff's house, he was comparatively subdued and easy to deal with. This Mr. Pecksniff attributed, at the time, to the effect his brother's death had had upon him. But from that hour his character seemed to have modified by regular degrees, and to have softened down into a dull indifference for almost every one but Mr. Pecksniff. His looks were much the same as ever, but his mind was singularly altered. It was not that this or that passion stood out in brighter or in dimmer hues: but that the colour of the whole man was faded. As one trait disappeared, no other trait sprung up to take its place. His senses dwindled too. He was less keen of sight: was deaf sometimes: took little notice of what passed before him: and would be profoundly taciturn for days together. The process of this alteration was so easy that almost as soon as it began to be observed it was complete. But Mr. Pecksniff saw it first, and, having Anthony Chuzzlewit fresh in his recollection, saw in his brother Martin the same process of decay.

To a gentleman of Mr. Pecksniff's tenderness, this was a very mournful sight. He could not but foresee the probability of his respected relative being made the victim of designing persons, and of his riches falling into worthless hands. It gave him so much pain that he resolved to secure the property to himself; to keep bad testamentary suitors at a distance; to wall up the old gentleman, as it were, for his own use. By little and little, therefore, he began to try whether Mr. Chuzzlewit gave any promise of becoming an instrument in his hands; and finding that he did, and indeed that he was very supple in his plastic fingers, he made it the business of his life — kind soul! — to establish an ascendancy over him; and every little test he durst apply meeting with a success beyond his hopes, he began to think he heard old Martin's cash already chinking in his own unworldly pockets.

But when Mr. Pecksniff pondered on this subject (as, in his zealous way, he often did), and thought with an uplifted heart of the train of circumstances which had delivered the old gentleman into his hands for the confusion of evil-doers and the triumph of a righteous nature, he always felt that Mary Graham was his stumbling-block. Let the old man say what he would, Mr. Pecksniff knew he had a strong affection for her. He knew that he showed it in a thousand little ways; that he liked to have her near him, and was never quite at ease when she was absent long. That he had ever really sworn to leave her nothing in his will, Mr. Pecksniff greatly doubted. That even if he had, there were many ways by which he could evade the oath and satisfy his conscience, Mr. Pecksniff knew. That her unprotected state was no light burden on the old man's mind, he also knew, for Mr. Chuzzlewit had plainly told him so. "Then," said Mr. Pecksniff, "what if I married her! What," repeated Mr. Pecksniff, sticking up his hair and glancing at his bust by Spoker — "what if, making sure of his approval first — he is nearly imbecile, poor gentleman — I married her!"

Mr. Pecksniff had a lively sense of the Beautiful; especially in women. His manner towards the sex was remarkable for its insinuating character. It is recorded of him in another part of these pages that he embraced Mrs. Todgers on the smallest provocation; and it was a way he had; it was a part of the gentle placidity of his disposition. Before any thought

of matrimony was in his mind, he had bestowed on Mary many little tokens of his spiritual admiration. They had been indignantly received, but that was nothing. True, as the idea expanded within him, these had become too ardent to escape the piercing eye of Cherry, who read his scheme at once; but he had always felt the power of Mary's charms. So Interest and Inclination made a pair, and drew the curricle of Mr. Pecksniff's plan.

As to any thought of revenging himself on young Martin for his insolent expressions when they parted, and of shutting him out still more effectually from any hope of reconciliation with his grandfather, Mr. Pecksniff was much too meek and forgiving to be suspected of harbouring it. As to being refused by Mary, Mr. Pecksniff was quite satisfied that in her position she could never hold out if he and Mr. Chuzzlewit were both against her. As to consulting the wishes of her heart in such a case, it formed no part of Mr. Pecksniff's moral code; for he knew what a good man he was, and what a blessing he must be to anybody. His daughter having broken the ice, and the murder being out between them, Mr. Pecksniff had now only to pursue his design as cleverly as he could, by the craftiest approaches.

"Well, my good sir," said Mr. Pecksniff, meeting Martin in the garden, for it was his habit to walk about in that way, as the fancy took him; "and how is my dear friend this delicious morning?"

"Do you mean me?" asked the old man.

"Ah!" said Mr. Pecksniff, "one of his deaf days. I see. Could I mean any one else, my dear sir?"

"You might have meant Mary," said the old man.

"Indeed I might. Quite true. I might speak of her as my dear, dear friend, I hope!" observed Mr. Pecksniff.

"I hope so," returned old Martin. "I think she deserves it."

"Think!" cried Pecksniff. "Think, Mr. Chuzzlewit!"

"You are speaking, I know," returned Martin, "but I can't hear what you say. Speak up!"

"He is getting deafer than a flint," said Pecksniff. "I was saying, my dear sir, that I am afraid I must make up my mind to part with Cherry."

"What has she been doing?" asked the old man.

"He puts the most ridiculous questions I ever heard!" muttered Mr. Pecksniff. "He's a child to-day." After which he added in a mild roar: "She hasn't been doing anything, my dear friend."

"What are you going to part with her for?" demanded Martin.

"She hasn't her health, by any means," said Mr. Pecksniff. "She misses her sister, my dear sir; they doted on each other from the cradle. And I think of giving her a run in London for a change. A good long run, sir, if I find she likes it."

"Quite right," cried Martin. "It's judicious."

"I am glad to hear you say so. I hope you mean to bear me company in this dull part, while she's away?" said Mr. Pecksniff.

"I have no intention of removing from it," was Martin's answer.

"Then why," said Mr. Pecksniff, taking the old man's arm in his, and walking slowly on — "why, my good sir, can't you come and stay with me? I am sure I could surround you with more comforts — lowly as is my cot — than you can obtain at a village house of entertainment. And, pardon me, Mr. Chuzzlewit, pardon me if I say that such a place as the Dragon, however well conducted (and, as far as I know, Mrs. Lupin is one of the worthiest creatures in this county), is hardly a home for Miss Graham."

Martin mused a moment; and then said, as he shook him by the hand: —

"No. You're quite right; it is not."

"The very sight of skittles," Mr. Pecksniff eloquently pursued, "is far from being congenial to a delicate mind."

"It's an amusement of the vulgar," said old Martin, "certainly."

"Of the very vulgar," Mr. Pecksniff answered. "Then why not bring Miss Graham here, sir? Here is the house! Here am I alone in it, for Thomas Pinch I do not count as any one. Our lovely friend shall occupy my daughter's chamber; you shall choose your own; we shall not quarrel, I hope!"

"We are not likely to do that," said Martin.

Mr. Pecksniff pressed his hand. "We understand each other, my dear sir, I see! — I can wind him," he thought, with exultation, "round my little finger!"

ave the recompense to me?" said the old man, a
silence.

Do not speak of recompense!" cried Pecksniff.

repeated Martin, with a glimmer of his old ob
leave the recompense to me. Do you?"

you desire it, my good sir."

ays desire it," said the old man. "You kno
desire it. I wish to pay as I go, even when I be
Not that I do not leave a balance to be settled one
niff."

architect was too much overcome to speak. He t
drop a tear upon his patron's hand, but couldn't find
his dry distillery.

"May that day be very distant!" was his pious exclamat
Ah, sir! If I could say how deep an interest I have in
nd yours! I allude to our beautiful young friend."

"True," he answered. "True. She need have some
interested in her. I did her wrong to train her as I
Orphan though she was, she would have found some
protect her whom she might have loved again. W
a child, I pleased myself with the thought that
my whim of placing her between me and false
I had done her a kindness. Now she is a
such comfort. She has no protector but herself. I
her at such odds with the world that any
fawn upon her at his pleasure. Indeed she
delicate consideration. Yes, indeed she does!"

"If her position could be altered and defined,
Pecksniff hinted.

"How can that be done? Should I make a
her, or a governess?"

"Heaven forbid!" said Mr. Pecksniff. "My
are other ways. There are, indeed. But I am
and embarrassed at present, and would rather
subject. I scarcely know what I mean. Permit me to
it at another time."

"You are not unwell?" asked Martin anxiously.

"No," cried Pecksniff. "No. Permit me to
it at another time. I'll walk a little. Bless you!"

Old Martin blessed him in return, and squeezed his
As he turned away, and slowly walked towards the house,

Pecksniff stood gazing after him; being pretty well recovered from his late emotion, which, in any other man, one might have thought had been assumed as a machinery for feeling Martin's pulse. The change in the old man found such a slight expression in his figure that Mr. Pecksniff, looking after him, could not help saying to himself: —

"And I can wind him round my little finger! Only think!"

Old Martin, happening to turn his head, saluted him affectionately. Mr. Pecksniff returned the gesture.

"Why the time was," said Mr. Pecksniff, "and not long ago, when he would n't look at me! How soothing is this change. Such is the delicate texture of the human heart; so complicated is the process of its being softened! Externally he looks the same, and I can wind him round my little finger. Only think!"

In sober truth, there did appear to be nothing on which Mr. Pecksniff might not have ventured with Martin Chuzzlewit; for whatever Mr. Pecksniff said or did was right, and whatever he advised was done. Martin had escaped so many snares from needy fortune-hunters, and had withered in the shell of his suspicion and distrust for so many years, but to become the good man's tool and plaything. With the happiness of this conviction painted on his face, the architect went forth upon his morning walk.

The summer weather in his bosom was reflected in the breast of Nature. Through deep green vistas where the boughs arched overhead, and showed the sunlight flashing in the beautiful perspective; through dewy fern from which the startled hares leaped up, and fled at his approach; by mantled pools, and fallen trees, and down in hollow places, rustling among last year's leaves whose scent woke memory of the past; the placid Pecksniff strolled. By meadow gates and hedges fragrant with wild roses; and by thatched-roof cottages whose inmates humbly bowed before him as a man both good and wise; the worthy Pecksniff walked in tranquil meditation. The bee passed onward, humming of the work he had to do; the idle gnats for ever going round and round in one contracting and expanding ring, yet always going on as fast as he, danced merrily before him; the colour of the long grass came and went, as if the light clouds made it timid as they floated through the distant air. The birds, so many Pecksniff con-

gaily upon every branch; and Mr. Pecksniff paid ... to the day by ruminating on his projects as he ...ong.

...ing to trip, in his abstraction, over the spreading root ...ree, he raised his pious eyes to take a survey of the ...fore him. It startled him to see the embodied image ...oughts not far ahead — Mary herself — and alone.

...rst Mr. Pecksniff stopped as if with the intention of ...g her; but his next impulse was to advance, which he ... a brisk pace; carolling as he went, so sweetly and with ... innocence, that he only wanted feathers and wings to ...d.

...ng notes behind her, not belonging to the songsters of ...ove, she looked round. Mr. Pecksniff kissed his hand, ...s at her side immediately.

"...mmuning with Nature?" said Mr. Pecksniff. "So am I."

She said the morning was so beautiful that she had walked further than she intended, and would return. Mr. Pecksniff said it was exactly his case, and he would return with her.

"Take my arm, sweet girl," said Mr. Pecksniff.

Mary declined it, and walked so very fast that he remonstrated. "You were loitering when I came upon you," Mr. Pecksniff said. "Why be so cruel as to hurry now? You would not shun me, would you?"

"Yes, I would," she answered, turning her glowing cheek indignantly upon him, "you know I would. Release me, Mr. Pecksniff. Your touch is disagreeable to me."

His touch! What, that chaste, patriarchal touch which Mrs. Todgers — surely a discreet lady — had endured, not only without complaint, but with apparent satisfaction! This was positively wrong. Mr. Pecksniff was sorry to hear her say it.

"If you have not observed," said Mary, "that it is so, pray take the assurance from my lips, and do not, as you are a gentleman, continue to offend me."

"Well, well!" said Mr. Pecksniff mildly. "I feel that I might consider this becoming in a daughter of my own, and why should I object to it in one so beautiful! It's harsh. It cuts me to the soul," said Mr. Pecksniff; "but I cannot quarrel with you, Mary."

She tried to say she was sorry to hear it, but burst into tears.

Mr. Pecksniff now repeated the Todgers performance on a comfortable scale, as if he intended it to last some time; and in his disengaged hand, catching hers, employed himself in separating the fingers with his own, and sometimes kissing them, as he pursued the conversation thus: —

"I am glad we met. I am very glad we met. I am able now to ease my bosom of a heavy load, and speak to you in confidence. Mary," said Mr. Pecksniff, in his tenderest tones, — indeed, they were so very tender that he almost squeaked, — "My soul! I love you!"

A fantastic thing, that maiden affectation! She made believe to shudder.

"I love you," said Mr. Pecksniff, "my gentle life, with a devotion which is quite surprising, even to myself. I did suppose that the sensation was buried in the silent tomb of a lady, only second to you in qualities of the mind and form; but I find I am mistaken."

She tried to disengage her hand, but might as well have tried to free herself from the embrace of an affectionate boa constrictor; if anything so wily may be brought into comparison with Pecksniff.

"Although I am a widower," said Mr. Pecksniff, examining the rings upon her fingers, and tracing the course of one delicate blue vein with his fat thumb, "a widower with two daughters, still I am not encumbered, my love. One of them, as you know, is married. The other, by her own desire, but with a view, I will confess — why not? — to my altering my condition, is about to leave her father's house. I have a character, I hope. People are pleased to speak well of me, I think. My person and manner are not absolutely those of a monster, I trust. Ah, naughty Hand!" said Mr. Pecksniff, apostrophising the reluctant prize, "why did you take me prisoner? Go, go!"

He slapped the hand to punish it; but relenting, folded it in his waistcoat, to comfort it again.

"Blessed in each other, and in the society of our venerable friend, my darling," said Mr. Pecksniff, "we shall be happy. When he is wafted to a haven of rest, we will console each other. My pretty primrose, what do you say?"

"It is possible," Mary answered, in a hurried manner, "that I ought to feel grateful for this mark of your confidence. I

cannot say that I do, but I am willing to suppose you [illegible] deserve my thanks. Take them; and pray leave me, [illegible] Pecksniff."

The good man smiled a greasy smile; and drew her [illegible] him.

"Pray, pray release me, Mr. Pecksniff. I cannot [illegible] your proposal. I cannot receive it. There are many to [illegible] it may be acceptable, but it is not so to me. As an [illegible] kindness and an act of pity, leave me!"

Mr. Pecksniff walked on with his arm round her waist, [illegible] her hand in his, as contentedly as if they had been all in [illegible] each other, and were joined together in the bonds of trust [illegible]

"If you force me by your superior strength," said Mary, [illegible] finding that good words had not the least effect upon him, [illegible] no further effort to suppress her indignation; "if you force [illegible] by your superior strength to accompany you back, and to be [illegible] subject of your insolence upon the way, you cannot [illegible] the expression of my thoughts. I hold you in the [illegible] abhorrence. I know your real nature and despise it."

"No, no," said Mr. Pecksniff sweetly. [illegible]

"By what arts or unhappy [illegible] influence over Mr. Chuzzlewit, I do not know, [illegible] may be strong enough to soften even this, [illegible] this, trust me, sir."

Mr. Pecksniff raised his heavy eyelids languidly, [illegible] fall again. It was saying with perfect [illegible] deed!"

"Is it not enough," said Mary, "that you [illegible] his nature, adapt his every prejudice to your [illegible] harden a heart naturally kind by shutting [illegible] all [illegible] but false and distorted views [illegible] not enough that you have the power of [illegible] you [illegible] but must you also be [illegible] so unworthily to me?"

Still Mr. Pecksniff led her [illegible] on, and [illegible] any [illegible] that ever pastured in the fields.

"Will nothing [illegible] cried Mary.

"My dear," observed Mr. Pecksniff, with a [illegible] habit of self-examination, and the practice of — shall I say virtue?"

"Of hypocrisy," said Mary.

"No, no," resumed Mr. Pecksniff, chafing the captive hand reproachfully; "of virtue — have enabled me to set such guards upon myself that it is really difficult to ruffle me. It is a curious fact, but it is difficult, do you know, for any one to ruffle me. And did she think," said Mr. Pecksniff, with a playful tightening of his grasp, "that *she* could! How little did she know his heart!"

Little, indeed! Her mind was so strangely constituted that she would have preferred the caresses of a toad, an adder, or a serpent — nay, the hug of a bear — to the endearments of Mr. Pecksniff.

"Come, come," said that good gentleman, "a word or two will set this matter right, and establish a pleasant understanding between us. I am not angry, my love."

"*You* angry!"

"No," said Mr. Pecksniff, "I am not. I say so. Neither are you."

There was a beating heart beneath his hand that told another story, though.

"I am sure you are not," said Mr. Pecksniff; "and I will tell you why. There are two Martin Chuzzlewits, my dear; and your carrying your anger to one might have a serious effect — who knows! — upon the other. You would n't wish to hurt him, would you?"

She trembled violently, and looked at him with such a proud disdain that he turned his eyes away, — no doubt lest he should be offended with her in spite of his better self.

"A passive quarrel, my love," said Mr. Pecksniff, "may be changed into an active one, remember. It would be sad to blight even a disinherited young man in his already blighted prospects; but how easy to do it. Ah! how easy! *Have* I influence with our venerable friend, do you think? Well, perhaps I have. Perhaps I have."

He raised his eyes to hers; and nodded with an air of banter that was charming.

"No," he continued thoughtfully. "Upon the whole, my sweet, if I were you, I 'd keep my secret to myself. I am not at all sure — very far from it — that it would surprise our friend in any way, for he and I have had some conversation together only this morning, and he is anxious, very anxious, to establish you in some more settled manner. But whether he was surprised

or not surprised, the consequence of your imparting it might be the same. Martin, junior, might suffer severely. I'd have compassion on Martin, junior, do you know?" said Mr. Pecksniff, with a persuasive smile. "Yes. He don't deserve it, but I would."

She wept so bitterly now, and was so much distressed, that he thought it prudent to unclasp her waist, and hold her only by the hand.

"As to our own share in the precious little mystery," said Mr. Pecksniff, "we will keep it to ourselves, and talk of it between ourselves, and you shall think it over. You will consent, my love; you will consent, I know. Whatever you may think; you will. I seem to remember to have heard — I really don't know where, or how," he added, with bewitching frankness, "that you and Martin, junior, when you were children, had a sort of childish fondness for each other. When we are married, you shall have the satisfaction of thinking that it did n't last, to ruin him, but passed away, to do him good [illegible] we'll see then what we can do to put some trifling [illegible] Martin, junior's, way. *Have* I any ill-[illegible] able friend? Well! Perhaps I have. Perhaps I [illegible]

The outlet from the wood in which these [illegible] occurred was close to Mr. Pecksniff's house. The [illegible] so near it that he stopped, and, holding up her [illegible] said in playful accents, as a parting fancy: —

"Shall I bite it?"

Receiving no reply he kissed it instead; and [illegible] down, inclined his flabby face to hers — he had a [illegible] although he *was* a good man — and with a [illegible] from such a source was quite enough to set her [illegible] and prosper her from that time forth, permitted her [illegible] him.

Gallantry in its true sense is supposed to [illegible] nify a man; and love has shed refinements [illegible] Cymons. But Mr. Pecksniff — perhaps because [illegible] exalted nature these were mere grossnesses — [illegible] appear to any unusual advantage, now that he was [illegible] On the contrary, he seemed to be shrunk and [illegible] trying to hide himself within himself; and to be [illegible] not having the power to do it. His shoes looked too [illegible] sleeves looked too long, his hair looked too limp; his [illegible]

too little; his features looked too mean; his exposed throat looked as if a halter would have done it good. For a minute or two, in fact, he was hot, and pale, and mean, and shy, and slinking, and consequently not at all Pecksniffian. But after that, he recovered himself, and went home with as beneficent an air as if he had been the High Priest of the summer weather.

"I have arranged to go, Papa," said Charity, "to-morrow."

"So soon, my child?"

"I can't go too soon," said Charity, "under the circumstances. I have written to Mrs. Todgers to propose an arrangement, and have requested her to meet me at the coach, at all events. You 'll be quite your own master now, Mr. Pinch!"

Mr. Pecksniff had just gone out of the room, and Tom had just come into it.

"My own master!" repeated Tom.

"Yes, you 'll have nobody to interfere with you," said Charity. "At least, I hope you won't. Hem! It 's a changing world."

"What! are — are *you* going to be married, Miss Pecksniff?" asked Tom in great surprise.

"Not exactly," faltered Cherry. "I have n't made up my mind to be. I believe I could be, if I chose, Mr. Pinch."

"Of course you could!" said Tom. And he said it in perfect good faith. He believed it from the bottom of his heart.

"No," said Cherry. "*I* am not going to be married. Nobody is, that I know of. Hem! But I am not going to live with papa. I have my reasons, but it 's all a secret. I shall always feel very kindly towards you, I assure you, for the boldness you showed that night. As to you and me, Mr. Pinch, *we* part the best friends possible!"

Tom thanked her for her confidence, and for her friendship, but there was a mystery in the former which perfectly bewildered him. In his extravagant devotion to the family, he had felt the loss of Merry more than any one, but those who knew that for all the slights he underwent he thought his own demerits were to blame, could possibly have understood. He had scarcely reconciled himself to that, when here was Charity about to leave them. She had grown up, as it were, under Tom's eye. The sisters were a part of Pecksniff, and a part of Tom; items in Pecksniff's goodness, and in Tom's service.

He could n't bear it; not two hours' sleep had Tom that night, through dwelling in his bed upon these dreadful changes.

When morning dawned, he thought he must have dreamed this piece of ambiguity; but no, on going down stairs he found them packing trunks and cording boxes, and making other preparations for Miss Charity's departure, which lasted all day long. In good time for the evening coach, Miss Charity deposited her housekeeping keys with much ceremony upon the parlour table: took a gracious leave of all the house; and quitted her paternal roof — a blessing for which the Pecksniffian servant was observed by some profane persons to be particularly active in the thanksgiving at church next Sunday.

## CHAPTER XXXI

MR. PINCH IS DISCHARGED OF A DUTY WHICH HE NEVER OWED TO ANYBODY; AND MR. PECKSNIFF DISCHARGES A DUTY WHICH HE OWES TO SOCIETY.

THE closing words of the last chapter lead naturally to the commencement of this, its successor; for it has to do with a church. With the church so often mentioned heretofore, in which Tom Pinch played the organ for nothing.

One sultry afternoon, about a week after Miss Charity's departure for London, Mr. Pecksniff, being out walking by himself, took it into his head to stray into the churchyard. As he was lingering among the tombstones, endeavouring to extract an available sentiment or two from the epitaphs — for he never lost an opportunity of making up a few moral crackers, to be let off as occasion served — Tom Pinch began to practise. Tom could run down to the church and do so whenever he had time to spare; for it was a simple little organ, provided with wind by the action of the musician's feet; and he was independent, even of a bellows-blower. Though if Tom had wanted one at any time, there was not a man or boy in all the village, and away to the turnpike (tollman included), but would have blown away for him till he was black in the face.

Mr. Pecksniff had no objection to music; not the least. He was tolerant of everything — he often said so. He considered it a vagabond kind of trifling, in general, just suited to Tom's capacity. But in regard to Tom's performance upon this same organ, he was remarkably lenient, singularly amiable; for when Tom played it on Sundays, Mr. Pecksniff in his unbounded sympathy felt as if he played it himself, and were a benefactor to the congregation. So whenever it was impossible to devise any other means of taking the value of Tom's wages out of him, Mr. Pecksniff gave him leave to cultivate this instrument. For which mark of his consideration, Tom was very grateful.

The afternoon was remarkably warm, and Mr. Pecksniff had

ng a long way. He had not what may be cal[illegible] music, but he knew when it had a tranquil[illegible] n his soul; and that was the case now, f[illegible] him like a melodious snore. He approached [illegible] and looking through the diamond lattice of a wi[illegible] porch, saw Tom, with the curtains in the loft d[illegible] playing away with great expression and tenderness. [illegible] church had an inviting air of coolness. The ol[illegible] supported by cross-beams, the hoary walls, the m[illegible] [illegible], and the cracked stone pavement, were refreshin[illegible] [illegible] at. There were leaves of ivy tapping gently at the [illegible] windows, and the sun poured in through only one; [illegible] g the body of the church in tempting shade. But the [illegible] tempting spot of all was one red-curtained and soft-cushi[illegible] pew wherein the official dignitaries of the place (of whom Pecksniff was the head and chief) enshrined themselves on [illegible] days. Mr. Pecksniff's seat was in the corner, a remark[illegible] comfortable corner, where his very large Prayer-Book was at [illegible] minute making the most of its quarto self upon the desk [illegible] determined to go in and rest.

He entered very softly, in part because [illegible] part because his tread was always soft [illegible] played a solemn tune, in part because [illegible] surprise him when he stopped. Unbolting [illegible] high pew of state, he glided in and shut it [illegible] sitting in his usual place, and stretching [illegible] hassocks, he composed himself to listen to [illegible]

It [illegible] circumstance that [illegible] there, where the force of [illegible] keep him wide awake [illegible] He [illegible] himself [illegible] In the very act of [illegible] In the very [illegible] was as fast as [illegible]

[illegible] After [illegible] to have [illegible] the same dreamy [illegible]

and awakening to an indolent curiosity upon the subject, opened his eyes.

He was so indolent, that after glancing at the hassocks and the pew he was already half-way off to sleep again, when it occurred to him that there really were voices in the church — low voices, talking earnestly hard by, while the echoes seemed to mutter responses. He roused himself, and listened.

Before he had listened half a dozen seconds, he became as broad awake as ever he had been in all his life. With eyes and ears and mouth wide open, he moved himself a very little with the utmost caution, and gathering the curtain in his hand, peeped out.

Tom Pinch and Mary — of course. He had recognised their voices, and already knew the topic they discussed. Looking like the small end of a guillotined man, with his chin on a level with the top of the pew, so that he might duck down immediately in case of either of them turning round, he listened. Listened with such concentrated eagerness, that his very hair and shirt-collar stood bristling up to help him.

"No," cried Tom. "No letters have ever reached me, except that one from New York. But don't be uneasy on that account, for it 's very likely they have gone away to some far-off place, where the posts are neither regular nor frequent. He said in that very letter that it might be so, even in that city to which they thought of travelling — Eden, you know."

"It is a great weight upon my mind," said Mary.

"Oh, but you must n't let it be," said Tom. "There 's a true saying that nothing travels so fast as ill news; and if the slightest harm had happened to Martin, you may be sure you would have heard of it long ago. I have often wished to say this to you," Tom continued with an embarrassment that became him very well, "but you have never given me an opportunity."

"I have sometimes been almost afraid," said Mary, "that you might suppose I hesitated to confide in you, Mr. Pinch."

"No," Tom stammered, "I — I am not aware that I ever supposed that. I am sure that if I have, I have checked the thought directly, as an injustice to you. I feel the delicacy of your situation in having to confide in me at all," said Tom, "but I would risk my life to save you from one day's uneasiness; indeed I would!"

Poor Tom!

"I have dreaded sometimes," Tom continued, "that I might have displeased you by — by having the boldness to try and anticipate your wishes now and then. At other times I have fancied that your kindness prompted you to keep aloof from me."

"Indeed!"

"It was very foolish, very presumptuous and ridiculous, to think so," Tom pursued; "but I feared you might suppose it possible that I — I — should admire you too much for my own peace, and so denied yourself the slight assistance you would otherwise have accepted from me. If such an idea has ever presented itself to you," faltered Tom, "pray dismiss it. I am easily made happy, and I shall live contented here long after you and Martin have forgotten me. I am a poor, shy, awkward creature, not at all a man of the world; and you should think no more of me, bless you, than if I were an old friar!"

If friars bear such hearts as thine, Tom, let friars multiply; though they have no such rule in all their stern arithmetic.

"Dear Mr. Pinch!" said Mary, giving him her hand; "I cannot tell you how your kindness moves me. I have never wronged you by the lightest doubt, and have never for an instant ceased to feel that you were all — much more than all — that Martin found you. Without the silent care and friendship I have experienced from you, my life here would have been unhappy. But you have been a good angel to me, filling me with gratitude of heart, hope, and courage."

"I am as little like an angel, I am afraid," replied Tom, shaking his head, "as any stone cherubim among the gravestones; and I don't think there are many real angels of *that* pattern. But I should like to know (if you will tell me) why you have been so very silent about Martin."

"Because I have been afraid," said Mary, "of injuring you."

"Of injuring me!" cried Tom.

"Of doing you an injury with your employer."

The gentleman in question dived.

"With Pecksniff!" rejoined Tom, with cheerful confidence. "Oh, dear, he 'd never think of us! He 's the best of men. The more at ease you were, the happier he would be. Oh, dear, you need n't be afraid of Pecksniff. He is not a spy."

Many a man in Mr. Pecksniff's place, if he could have dived through the floor of the pew of state and come out at Calcutta or any inhabited region on the other side of the earth, would have done it instantly. Mr. Pecksniff sat down upon a hassock, and listening more attentively than ever, smiled.

Mary seemed to have expressed some dissent in the meanwhile, for Tom went on to say, with honest energy: —

"Well, I don't know how it is, but it always happens, whenever I express myself in this way, to anybody almost, that I find they won't do justice to Pecksniff. It is one of the most extraordinary circumstances that ever came within my knowledge, but it is so. There 's John Westlock, who used to be a pupil here, one of the best-hearted young men in the world, in all other matters — I really believe John would have Pecksniff flogged at the cart's tail if he could. And John is not a solitary case, for every pupil we have had in my time has gone away with the same inveterate hatred of him. There was Mark Tapley, too, quite in another station of life," said Tom; "the mockery he used to make of Pecksniff when he was at the Dragon was shocking. Martin too — Martin was worse than any of 'em. But I forgot. He prepared you to dislike Pecksniff, of course. So you came with a prejudice, you know, Miss Graham, and are not a fair witness."

Tom triumphed very much in this discovery, and rubbed his hands with great satisfaction.

"Mr. Pinch," said Mary, "you mistake him."

"No, no!" cried Tom. "*You* mistake him. But," he added, with a rapid change in his tone, "what is the matter? Miss Graham, what is the matter?"

Mr. Pecksniff brought up to the top of the pew, by slow degrees, his hair, his forehead, his eyebrow, his eye. She was sitting on a bench beside the door with her hands before her face; and Tom was bending over her.

"What is the matter!" cried Tom. "Have I said anything to hurt you? Has any one said anything to hurt you? Don't cry. Pray tell me what it is. I cannot bear to see you so distressed. Mercy on us, I never was so surprised and grieved in all my life!"

Mr. Pecksniff kept his eye in the same place. He could have moved it now for nothing short of a gimlet or a red-hot wire.

"I would n't have told you, Mr. Pinch," said Mary, "if I

could have helped it; but your delusion is so absorbing and it is so necessary that we should be upon our guard, that you should not be compromised and to that end that you should know by whom I am beset, that no alternative is left me. I came here purposely to tell you, but I think I should have wanted courage if you had not chanced to lead me so directly to the object of my coming."

Tom gazed at her steadfastly, and seemed to say, "What else?" But he said not a word.

"That person whom you think the best of men" — said Mary, looking up, and speaking with a quivering lip and flashing eye.

"Lord bless me!" muttered Tom, staggering back. "Wait a moment. That person whom I think the best of men! You mean Pecksniff, of course. Yes, I see you mean Pecksniff. Good gracious me, don't speak without authority. What has he done? If he is not the best of men, what is he?"

"The worst. The falsest, craftiest, meanest, cruellest, most sordid, most shameless," said the trembling girl — trembling with her indignation.

Tom sat down on a seat, and clasped his hands.

"What is he," said Mary, "who, receiving me in his house as his guest — his unwilling guest — knowing my history, and how defenceless and alone I am, presumes before his daughters to affront me so, that if I had a brother but a child who saw it, he would instinctively have helped me?"

"He is a scoundrel!" exclaimed Tom. "Whoever he may be, he is a scoundrel."

Mr. Pecksniff dived again.

"What is he," said Mary, "who, when my only friend, a dear and kind one too, was in full health of mind, humbled himself before him, but was spurned away (for he knew him then) like a dog; who, in his forgiving spirit, now that that friend is sunk into a failing state, can crawl about him again, and use the influence he basely gains, for every base and wicked purpose, and not for one — not one — that's true or good?"

"I say he is a scoundrel," answered Tom.

"But what is he — oh, Mr. Pinch, what *is* he — who, thinking he could compass these designs the better if I were his wife, assails me with the coward's argument that if I marry him, Martin, on whom I have brought so much misfortune, shall be

restored to something of his former hopes; and if I do not, shall be plunged in deeper ruin? What is he who makes my very constancy to one I love with all my heart a torture to myself and wrong to him; who makes me, do what I will, the instrument to hurt a head I would heap blessings on! What is he who, winding all these cruel snares about me, explains their purpose to me, with a smooth tongue and a smiling face, in the broad light of day; dragging me on the while in his embrace, and holding to his lips a hand," pursued the agitated girl, extending it, "which I would have struck off, if with it I could lose the shame and degradation of his touch?"

"I say," cried Tom, in great excitement, "he is a scoundrel and a villain. I don't care who he is, I say he is a double-dyed and most intolerable villain!"

Covering her face with her hands again, as if the passion which had sustained her through these disclosures lost itself in an overwhelming sense of shame and grief, she abandoned herself to tears.

Any sight of distress was sure to move the tenderness of Tom, but this especially. Tears and sobs from her were arrows in his heat. He tried to comfort her; sat down beside her; expended all his store of homely eloquence, and spoke in words of praise and hope of Martin. Ay, though he loved her from his soul with such a self-denying love as woman seldom wins, he spoke from first to last of Martin. Not the wealth of the rich Indies would have tempted Tom to shirk one mention of her lover's name.

When she was more composed, she impressed upon Tom that this man she had described was Pecksniff in his real colours; and word by word and phrase by phrase, as well as she remembered it, related what had passed between them in the wood — which was no doubt a source of high gratification to that gentleman himself, who, in his desire to see and his dread of being seen, was constantly diving down into the state pew and coming up again like the intelligent householder in Punch's Show, who avoids being knocked on the head with a cudgel. When she had concluded her account, and had besought Tom to be very distant and unconscious in his manner towards her after this explanation, and had thanked him very much, they parted on the alarm of footsteps in the burial-ground; and Tom was left alone in the church again.

And now the full agitation and misery of the disclosure came rushing upon Tom indeed. The star of his whole life from boyhood had become, in a moment, putrid vapour. It was not that Pecksniff, Tom's Pecksniff, had ceased to exist, but that he never had existed. In his death Tom would have had the comfort of remembering what he used to be, but in this discovery he had the anguish of recollecting what he never was. For as Tom's blindness in this matter had been total and not partial, so was his restored sight. *His* Pecksniff could never have worked the wickedness of which he had just now heard, but any other Pecksniff could; and the Pecksniff who could do that, could do anything, and no doubt had been doing anything and everything except the right thing, all through his career. From the lofty height on which poor Tom had placed his idol it was tumbled down headlong, and

"Not all the king's horses nor all the king's men
Could have set Mr. Pecksniff up again."

Legions of Titans could n't have got him out of the mud; and serve him right! But it was not he who suffered; it was Tom. His compass was broken, his chart destroyed, his chronometer had stopped, his masts were gone by the board; his anchor was adrift, ten thousand leagues away.

Mr. Pecksniff watched him with a lively interest, for he divined the purpose of Tom's ruminations, and was curious to see how he conducted himself. For some time Tom wandered up and down the aisle like a man demented, stopping occasionally to lean against a pew and think it over; then he stood staring at a blank old monument bordered tastefully with skulls and cross-bones, as if it were the finest work of Art he had ever seen, although at other times he held it in unspeakable contempt; then he sat down; then walked to and fro again; then went wandering up into the organ-loft, and touched the keys. But their minstrelsy was changed, their music gone; and sounding one long melancholy chord, Tom drooped his head upon his hands and gave it up as hopeless.

"I would n't have cared," said Tom Pinch, rising from his stool, and looking down into the church as if he had been the Clergyman, "I would n't have cared for anything he might have done to Me, for I have tried his patience often, and have lived upon his sufferance, and have never been the help to him that others could have been. I would n't have minded, Peck-

sniff," Tom continued, little thinking who heard him, "if you had done Me any wrong; I could have found plenty of excuses for that; and though you might have hurt me, could have still gone on respecting you. But why did you ever fall so low as this in my esteem! Oh, Pecksniff, Pecksniff, there is nothing I would not have given to have had you deserve my old opinion of you; nothing!"

Mr. Pecksniff sat upon the hassock pulling up his shirt-collar, while Tom, touched to the quick, delivered this apostrophe. After a pause he heard Tom coming down the stairs, jingling the church keys; and bringing his eye to the top of the pew again, saw him go slowly out and lock the door.

Mr. Pecksniff durst not issue from his place of concealment; for through the windows of the church he saw Tom passing on among the graves, and sometimes stopping at a stone, and leaning there, as if he were a mourner who had lost a friend. Even when he had left the churchyard, Mr. Pecksniff still remained shut up — not being at all secure but that in his restless state of mind Tom might come wandering back. At length he issued forth, and walked with a pleasant countenance into the vestry; where he knew there was a window near the ground, by which he could release himself by merely stepping out.

He was in a curious frame of mind, Mr. Pecksniff; being in no hurry to go, but rather inclining to a dilatory trifling with the time, which prompted him to open the vestry cupboard, and look at himself in the parson's little glass that hung within the door. Seeing that his hair was rumpled, he took the liberty of borrowing the canonical brush and arranging it. He also took the liberty of opening another cupboard; but he shut it up again quickly, being rather startled by the sight of a black and a white surplice dangling against the wall; which had very much the appearance of two curates who had committed suicide by hanging themselves. Remembering that he had seen in the first cupboard a port-wine bottle and some biscuits, he peeped into it again, and helped himself with much deliberation; cogitating all the time though, in a very deep and weighty manner, as if his thoughts were otherwise employed.

He soon made up his mind, if it had ever been in doubt; and putting back the bottle and biscuits, opened the casement. He got out into the churchyard without any difficulty; shut the window after him; and walked straight home.

"Is Mr. Pinch in-doors!" asked Mr. Pecksniff of his
ing-maid.

"Just come in, sir."

"Just come in, eh!" repeated Mr. Pecksniff
"And gone up stairs, I suppose!"

"Yes, sir. Gone up stairs. Shall I call him, sir!"

"No," said Mr. Pecksniff, "no. You need n't call
Jane. Thank you, Jane. How are your relations, Jane!

"Pretty well, I thank you, sir."

"I am glad to hear it. Let them know I asked about t
Jane. Is Mr. Chuzzlewit in the way, Jane!"

"Yes, sir. He 's in the parlour, reading."

"He 's in the parlour, reading, is he, Jane!" said
Pecksniff. "Very well. Then I think I 'll go and see
Jane."

Never had Mr. Pecksniff been beheld in a more pla
humour!

**But when he walked into the parlour where the old** was engaged as Jane had said, with pen and ink and paper a table close at hand (for Mr. Pecksniff was particular to have him well supplied with writing became less cheerful. He was not angry, tive, he was not cross, he was not moody, he was sorely grieved. As he sat down by t two tears — not tears like those with which M but their entries out, but drops so precious that for their ink — stole down his mortified

"What is the matter!" asked old Mart what ails you, man!"

"I am sorry to interrupt you, my dear sir, I am sorry for the cause. My good, my w deceived."

"You are deceived!"

"Ah!" cried Mr. Pecksniff, in an agony, the worst point. Cruelly deceived in that I believed the most unbounded confidence Mr. Chuzzlewit, by Thomas Pinch!"

"Bad, bad, bad!" said Martin, lay "Not bad!" I hope not. Are you certain!"

"Certain, my good sir! My eyes and ears are I would not have believed it otherwise. I would not have

lieved it, Mr. Chuzzlewit, if a Fiery Serpent had proclaimed it from the top of Salisbury Cathedral. I would have said," cried Mr. Pecksniff, "that the Serpent lied. Such was my faith in Thomas Pinch, that I would have cast the falsehood back into the Serpent's teeth, and would have taken Thomas to my heart. But I am not a Serpent, sir, myself, I grieve to say, and no excuse or hope is left me."

Martin was greatly disturbed to see him so much agitated, and to hear such unexpected news. He begged him to compose himself, and asked upon what subject Mr. Pinch's treachery had been developed.

"That is almost the worst of all, sir," Mr. Pecksniff answered. "On a subject nearly concerning *you*. Oh! is it not enough," said Mr. Pecksniff, looking upward, "that these blows must fall on me, but must they also hit my friends!"

"You alarm me," cried the old man, changing colour. "I am not so strong as I was. You terrify me, Pecksniff!"

"Cheer up, my noble sir," said Mr. Pecksniff, taking courage, "and we will do what is required of us. You shall know all, sir, and shall be righted. But first excuse me, sir, ex—cuse me. I have a duty to discharge, which I owe to society."

He rang the bell, and Jane appeared.

"Send Mr. Pinch here, if you please, Jane!"

Tom came — constrained and altered in his manner, downcast and dejected, visibly confused; not liking to look Pecksniff in the face.

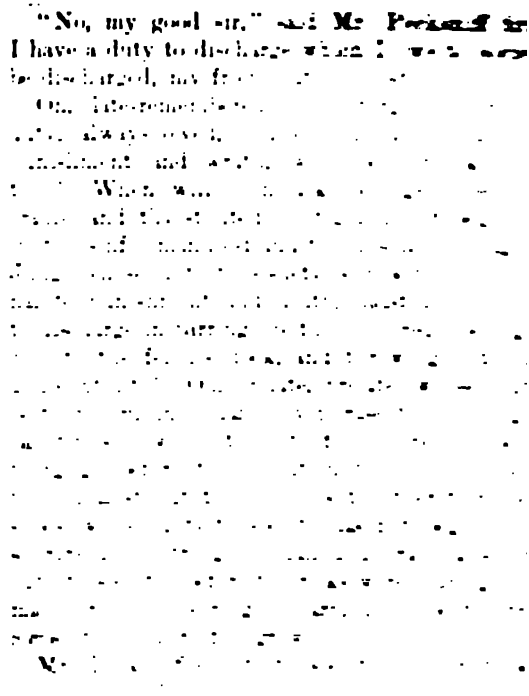
The honest man bestowed a glance on Mr. Chuzzlewit, as who should say "You see!" and addressed himself to Tom in these terms: —

"Mr. Pinch, I have left the vestry-window unfastened. Will you do me the favour to go and secure it; then bring the keys of the sacred edifice to me!"

"The vestry-window, sir?" cried Tom.

"You understand me, Mr. Pinch, I think," returned his patron. "Yes, Mr. Pinch, the vestry-window. I grieve to say that sleeping in the church after a fatiguing ramble, I overheard just now some fragments," he emphasised that word, "of a dialogue between two parties; and one of them locking the church when he went out, I was obliged to leave it myself by the vestry-window. Do me the favour to secure that vestry-window, Mr. Pinch, and then come back to me."

"No, my good sir," said Mr [illegible]
I have a duty to discharge which I [illegible]
be discharged, nay from [illegible]



window, and Mr. Pecksniff in an imposing attitude at the table. On one side of him was his pocket-handkerchief; and on the other a little heap (a very little heap) of gold and silver, and odd pence. Tom saw, at a glance, that it was his own salary for the current quarter.

"Have you fastened the vestry-window, Mr. Pinch?" said Pecksniff.

"Yes, sir."

"Thank you. Put down the keys, if you please, Mr. Pinch."

Tom placed them on the table. He held the bunch by the key of the organ-loft (though it was one of the smallest) and looked hard at it as he laid it down. It had been an old, old friend of Tom's; a kind companion to him, many and many a day.

"Mr. Pinch," said Pecksniff, shaking his head, "oh, Mr. Pinch! I wonder you can look me in the face!"

Tom did it, though, and notwithstanding that he has been described as stooping generally, he stood as upright then as man could stand.

"Mr. Pinch," said Pecksniff, taking up his handkerchief, as if he felt that he should want it soon, "I will not dwell upon the past. I will spare you, and I will spare myself, that pain at least."

Tom's was not a very bright eye, but it was a very expressive one when he looked at Mr. Pecksniff, and said: —

"Thank you, sir. I am very glad you will not refer to the past."

"The present is enough," said Mr. Pecksniff, dropping a penny, "and the sooner *that* is past, the better. Mr. Pinch, I will not dismiss you without a word of explanation. Even such a course would be quite justifiable under the circumstances; but it might wear an appearance of hurry, and I will not do it; for I am," said Mr. Pecksniff, knocking down another penny, "perfectly self-possessed. Therefore I will say to you what I have already said to Mr. Chuzzlewit."

Tom glanced at the old gentleman, who nodded now and then as approving of Mr. Pecksniff's sentences and sentiments, but interposed between them in no other way.

"From fragments of a conversation which I overheard in the church, just now, Mr. Pinch," said Pecksniff, "between your-

self and Miss Graham — I say fragments, because I was slumbering at a considerable distance from you, when I was roused by your voices — and from what I saw, I ascertained (I would have given a good deal not to have ascertained, Mr. Pinch) that you, forgetful of all ties of duty and of honour, sir; regardless of the sacred laws of hospitality, to which you were pledged as an inmate of this house; have presumed to address Miss Graham with unreturned professions of attachment and proposals of love."

Tom looked at him steadily.

"Do you deny it, sir?" asked Mr. Pecksniff, dropping one pound two and fourpence, and making a great business of picking it up again.

"No, sir," replied Tom. "I do not."

"You do not," said Mr. Pecksniff, glancing at the old gentleman. "Oblige me by counting this money, Mr. Pinch, and putting your name to this receipt. You do not?"

No, Tom did not. He scorned to deny it. He saw that Mr. Pecksniff having overheard his own disgrace, cared not a jot for sinking lower yet in his contempt. He saw that he had devised this fiction as the readiest means of getting rid of him at once, but that it must end in that any way. He saw that Mr. Pecksniff reckoned on his not denying it, because his doing so and explaining would incense the old man more than ever against Martin, and against Mary; while Pecksniff himself would only have been mistaken in his "fragments." Deny it! No.

"You find the amount correct, do you, Mr. Pinch?" said Pecksniff.

"Quite correct, sir," answered Tom.

"A person is waiting in the kitchen," said Mr. Pecksniff, "to carry your luggage wherever you please. We part, Mr. Pinch, at once, and are strangers from this time."

Something without a name; compassion, sorrow, old tenderness, mistaken gratitude, habit, — none of these, and yet all of them, smote upon Tom's gentle heart at parting. There was no such soul as Pecksniff's in that carcase; and yet, though his speaking out had not involved the compromise of one he loved, he could n't have denounced the very shape and figure of the man — not even then.

"I will not say," cried Mr. Pecksniff, shedding tears, "what

a blow this is. I will not say how much it tries me, how it works upon my nature; how it grates upon my feelings. I do not care for that. I can endure as well as another man. But what I have to hope, and what you have to hope, Mr. Pinch (otherwise a great responsibility rests upon you), is, that this deception may not alter my ideas of humanity; that it may not impair my freshness, or contract, if I may use the expression, my Pinions. I hope it will not; I don't think it will. It may be a comfort to you, if not now, at some future time, to know, that I shall endeavour not to think the worse of my fellow-creatures in general for what has passed between us. Farewell."

Tom had meant to spare him one little puncturation with a lancet, which he had it in his power to administer, but he changed his mind on hearing this, and said: —

"I think you left something in the church, sir."

"Thank you, Mr. Pinch," said Pecksniff. "I am not aware that I did."

"This is your double eye-glass, I believe?" said Tom.

"Oh!" cried Pecksniff, with some degree of confusion. "I am obliged to you. Put it down, if you please."

"I found it," said Tom slowly — "when I went to bolt the vestry-window — in the Pew."

So he had. Mr. Pecksniff had taken it off when he was bobbing up and down, lest it should strike against the panelling, and had forgotten it. Going back to the church with his mind full of having been watched, and wondering very much from what part, Tom's attention was caught by the door of the state pew standing open. Looking into it he found the glass. And thus he knew, and by returning it gave Mr. Pecksniff the information that he knew, where the listener had been; and that instead of overhearing fragments of the conversation, he must have rejoiced in every word of it.

"I am glad he 's gone," said Martin, drawing a long breath when Tom had left the room.

"It *is* a relief," assented Mr. Pecksniff. "It is a great relief. But having discharged — I hope with tolerable firmness — the duty which I owed to society, I will now, my dear sir, if you will give me leave, retire to shed a few tears in the back garden, as an humble individual."

Tom went up stairs; cleared his shelf of books; packed

them up with his music and an old fiddle in his trunk; got out his clothes (they were not so many that they made his head ache); put them on the top of his books, and went into the workroom for his case of instruments. There was a ragged stool there, with the horsehair all sticking out of the top like a wig: a very Beast of a stool in itself, on which he had taken up his daily seat, year after year, during the whole period of his service. They had grown older and shabbier in company. Pupils had served their time; seasons had come and gone; Tom and the worn-out stool had held together through it all. That part of the room was traditionally called "Tom's Corner." It had been assigned to him at first because of its being situated in a strong draught, and a great way from the fire; and he had occupied it ever since. There were portraits of him on the wall, with all his weak points monstrously portrayed. Diabolical sentiments, foreign to his character, were represented as issuing from his mouth in fat balloons. Every pupil had added something, even unto fancy portraits of his father with one eye, and of his mother with a disproportionate nose, and especially of his sister — who always being presented as extremely beautiful, made full amends to Tom for any other joke. Under less uncommon circumstances, it would have cut Tom to the heart to leave these things, and think that he saw them for the last time; but it didn't now. There was no Pecksniff; there never had been a Pecksniff; and all his other griefs were swallowed up in that.

So when he returned into the bedroom, and, having fastened his box and a carpet-bag, put on his walking gaiters, and his great-coat, and his hat, and taken his stick in his hand, he looked round it for the last time. Early on summer mornings, and by the light of private candle-ends on winter nights, he had read himself half blind in this same room. He had tried in this same room to learn the fiddle under the bed-clothes, but yielding to objections from the other pupils, had reluctantly abandoned the design. At any other time he would have parted from it with a pang, thinking of all he had learned there, of the many hours he had passed there — for the love of his very dreams. But there was no Pecksniff; there never had been a Pecksniff; and the unreality of Pecksniff extended itself to the chamber, in which, sitting on one particular bed, the thing supposed to be that Great Abstraction had often

preached morality with such effect, that Tom had felt a moisture in his eyes, while hanging breathless on the words.

The man engaged to bear his box — Tom knew him well; a Dragon man — came stamping up the stairs, and made a roughish bow to Tom (to whom in common times he would have nodded with a grin) as though he were aware of what had happened, and wished him to perceive, it made no difference in *him*. It was clumsily done; he was a mere waterer of horses; but Tom liked the man for it, and felt it more than going away.

Tom would have helped him with the box, but he made no more of it, though it was a heavy one, than an elephant would have made of a castle: just swinging it on his back and bowling down stairs as if, being naturally a heavy sort of fellow, he could carry a box infinitely better than he could go alone. Tom took the carpet-bag, and went down stairs along with him. At the outer door stood Jane, crying with all her might; and on the steps was Mrs. Lupin, sobbing bitterly, and putting out her hand for Tom to shake.

"You 're coming to the Dragon, Mr. Pinch?"

"No," said Tom, "no. I shall walk to Salisbury to-night. I could n't stay here. For goodness' sake, don't make me so unhappy, Mrs. Lupin."

"But you will come to the Dragon, Mr. Pinch. If it 's only for to-night. To see me, you know — not as a traveller."

"God bless my soul!" said Tom, wiping his eyes. "The kindness of people is enough to break one's heart! I mean to go to Salisbury to-night, my dear good creature. If you 'll take care of my box for me, till I write for it, I shall consider it the greatest kindness you can do me."

"I wish," cried Mrs. Lupin, "there were twenty boxes, Mr. Pinch, that I might have 'em all."

"Thankee," said Tom. "It 's like you. Good-by. Good-by."

There were several people, young and old, standing about the door, some of whom cried with Mrs. Lupin; while others tried to keep up a stout heart as Tom did; and others were absorbed in admiration of Mr. Pecksniff — a man who could build a church, as one may say, by squinting at a sheet of paper; and others were divided between that feeling, and sympathy with Tom. Mr. Pecksniff had appeared on the top of

the steps, simultaneously with his old pupil, and while Tom was talking with Mrs. Lupin kept his hand stretched out, as though he said "Go forth!" When Tom went forth, and had turned the corner, Mr. Pecksniff shook his head, shut his eyes, and heaving a deep sigh, shut the door. On which, the best of Tom's supporters said he must have done some dreadful deed, or such a man as Mr. Pecksniff never could have felt like that. If it had been a common quarrel (they observed) he would have said something, but when he did n't, Mr. Pinch must have shocked him dreadfully.

Tom was out of hearing of their shrewd opinions, and plodded on as steadily as he could go, until he came within sight of the turnpike where the tollman's family had cried out "Mr. Pinch!" that frosty morning when he went to meet young Martin. He had got through the village, and this toll-bar was his last trial; but when the infant toll-takers came screeching out, he had half a mind to run for it, and make a bolt across the country.

"Why deary Mr. Pinch! oh, deary sir!" exclaimed the tollman's wife. "What an unlikely time for you to be a going this way with a bag!"

"I am going to Salisbury," said Tom.

"Why, goodness, where 's the gig then?" cried the tollman's wife, looking down the road, as if she thought Tom might have been upset without observing it.

"I have n't got it," said Tom. "I —" He could n't evade it; he felt she would have him in the next question, if he got over this one. "I have left Mr. Pecksniff."

The tollman — a crusty customer, always smoking solitary pipes in a Windsor chair inside, set artfully between two little windows that looked up and down the road, so that when he saw anything coming up, he might hug himself on having toll to take, and when he saw it going down, might hug himself on having taken it — the tollman was out in an instant.

"Left Mr. Pecksniff!" cried the tollman.

"Yes," said Tom, "left him."

The tollman looked at his wife, uncertain whether to ask her if she had anything to suggest, or to order her to mind the children. Astonishment making him surly, he preferred the latter, and sent her into the tollhouse with a flea in her ear.

"You left Mr. Pecksniff!" cried the tollman, folding his

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arms and spreading his legs. "I should as soon have thought of his head leaving him."

"Ay!" said Tom, "so should I, yesterday. Good night!"

If a heavy drove of oxen had n't come by, immediately, the tollman would have gone down to the village straight to inquire into it. As things turned out, he smoked another pipe, and took his wife into his confidence. But their united sagacity could make nothing of it, and they went to bed — metaphorically — in the dark. But several times that night, when a wagon or other vehicle came through, and the driver asked the tollkeeper "What news?" he looked at the man by the light of his lantern, to assure himself that he had an interest in the subject, and then said, wrapping his watch-coat round his legs:—

"You 've heerd of Mr. Pecksniff down yonder?"

"Ah! sure-ly!"

"And of his young man Mr. Pinch, p'raps?"

"Ah!"

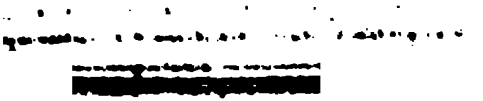
"They 've parted."

After every one of these disclosures, the tollman plunged into his house again, and was seen no more, while the other side went on, in great amazement.

But this was long after Tom was abed, and Tom was now with his face towards Salisbury, doing his best to get there. The evening was beautiful at first, but it became cloudy and dull at sunset, and the rain fell heavily soon afterwards. For ten long miles he plodded on, wet through, until at last the lights appeared, and he came into the welcome precincts of the city.

He went to the inn where he had waited for Martin, and briefly answering their inquiries after Mr. Pecksniff, ordered a bed. He had no heart for tea or supper, meat or drink of any kind, but sat by himself before an empty table in the public room while the bed was getting ready, revolving in his mind all that had happened that eventful day, and wondering what he could or should do for the future. It was a great relief when the chambermaid came in, and said the bed was ready.

It was a low four-poster shelving downward in the centre like a trough, and the room was crowded with impracticable tables and exploded chests of drawers, full of damp linen. A graphic representation in oil of a remarkably fat ox hung over the fireplace, and the portrait of some former landlord (who

might have been the one's brother, he was so like him) stood mutually in, at the foot of the bed. A variety of queer smells were partially quenched in the prevailing scent of very old lavender: and the window had not been opened for such a long space of time, that it pleaded immemorial usage and would n't come open now.

These were trifles in themselves, but they added to the strangeness of the place, and did not induce Tom to forget his new position. Pecksniff had gone out of the world—had never been in it—and it was as much as Tom could do to say his prayers without him. But he felt happier afterwards, and went to sleep, and dreamed about him as he Never Was.